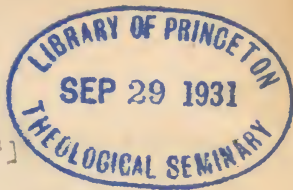


12, 185  
[Davies, Samuel]



INTRODUCTORY ESSAY  
ON THE  
LIFE AND TIMES OF THE AUTHOR.

BY  
ALBERT BARNES.

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PRESIDENT DAVIES' SERMONS, in the editions which have been heretofore published in this country, have been preceded by the following discourses: (1.) A sermon entitled "The disinterested and devoted Christian, preached at Nassau Hall, Princeton, May 28, 1761; occasioned by the death of the Rev. Samuel Davies, A.M., late President of the College of New Jersey, by Samuel Finley, D.D., President of the said college," on. Rom. xiv. 7, 8. (2.) A brief "Appendix" annexed to the above sermon, containing some of the leading facts in the life of President Davies. (3.) Two sermons entitled, "Divine Conduct Vindicated," preached at Haberdashers' Hall, London, March 29, 1761, on the decease of President Davies, by Thomas Gibbons, D.D. (4.) An essay on the character of President Davies, by Rev. David Bostwick, M.A., of New York.

In issuing a new edition of these sermons from the press, it has been thought best to omit these discourses; to arrange the facts in regard to the life of President Davies which they furnish; to add such other facts as could be obtained from other sources, and to suggest some considerations which might illustrate the nature of the ministry which is demanded in the present age. Much of the matter found in the discourses prefixed to the former editions has little relevancy to the questions which are asked

respecting President Davies, and would be of little use to those who might desire to avail themselves of the aid which may be derived from the study of his writings, in qualifying themselves for the work of the ministry.

In preparing this Introductory Essay, I have been materially aided by the "Notes" on the life of President Davies in the Appendix to the Baccalaureate Discourses of the Rev. Dr. Green, delivered in Nassau Hall, and also by several interesting communications addressed to me by the Rev. William Hill, D.D., of Winchester, Virginia. In the communications which Dr. Hill had the kindness to make for this Introductory Essay—to whom I desire in this manner to make most grateful acknowledgments—he has presented views of the state of religion in Virginia before the time of Mr. Davies' settlement, and of the effects of his labors, of great interest. No man living has had better opportunities of being familiar with the character and effect of Mr. Davies' labors; and I am thankful that I am permitted to be the instrument in this manner of preserving so many valuable reminiscences of his life. The communications of Dr. Hill are preserved mainly in his own language.

The Reverend Samuel Davies was born on the third day of November, A.D. 1724, in the county of Newcastle, then in the province of Pennsylvania, but now in the state of Delaware. He is supposed to have been of Welsh descent, both by his father's and mother's side. His father was a farmer, who lived with great plainness and simplicity, and who supported the character of an honest and pious man.\* He died, says Dr. Hill, when Samuel was young. His mother survived him but a short time. She was a woman of eminent piety, and of very superior natural powers of mind; and the distinguished piety and usefulness of her son, is one among the many instances which have occurred where the prayers and example of a pious mother have been signally blessed.

He was an only son. By maternal feelings and vows he had been devoted to God; and the name *Samuel* was given to him by his mother, as an expression of the same feelings which had

\* "He was a man of small property, of intellectual endowments rather below than above the common level, of unpolished manners, but of a blameless life,"—DR. GREEN.

led to the bestowment of the name on the distinguished prophet. 1 Sam. i. 11. He remained with his parents until he was about ten years of age, and was taught by his mother, there being no school in the vicinity. His progress in these early years is spoken of as such as to attract attention, and as indicating uncommon promise. During this period of his life, it is not known that he had any impressions of special seriousness. He is described as a boy of uncommon sprightliness; as demeaning himself with propriety, and as making rapid progress in his studies.

At about ten years of age, he was sent to an English school at some distance from his father's, where he continued two years, and made great progress in learning. Away from his father's home, however, and lacking the counsel and example of his pious parents, his mind became more careless on the subject of religion. Yet he was then in the habit of secret prayer, particularly in the evening. The reason why he did this, as he stated in his diary, was that "he feared lest he should perhaps die before morning." It is remarkable, also, in his prayers at that time, that "he was more ardent in his supplications for being introduced into the gospel ministry, than for any other thing."

The first twelve years of his life, however, he afterwards regarded as having been wasted in the most entire negligence of God and religion. At about this period of his life, it is probable, he was brought to see his need of a Savior, and to devote himself to the service of that God to whom he had been consecrated by the vows and prayers of his mother. Of the exercises of his mind at that time, little is now known. The influence of his mother's example and prayers, and of the fact that he had been early devoted by her to God, is known to have produced a deep impression on his own mind. In a letter addressed by him many years after to a friend in London, he says, "That he was blessed with a mother whom he might account, without filial vanity or partiality, one of the most eminent saints he ever knew upon earth. And here," says he, "I cannot but mention to my friend an anecdote known but to few, that is, that I am a son of prayer, like my namesake Samuel, the prophet; and my mother called me Samuel because, she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.' This early dedication to God has always been a strong inducement to me to devote myself to him as a personal act; and the

most important blessings of my life I have looked upon as immediate answers to the prayers of a pious mother."

What was the immediate means by which his mind was awakened and which led to his conversion, and what were the mental exercises through which he then passed, are now unknown. No record that I have been able to find, has furnished any light on a question of so much interest. Dr. Green remarks of him that "he was so deeply impressed with a rational sense of his danger as to make him habitually uneasy and restless, till he obtained satisfactory evidence of his interest in the forgiving love of God. Yet he was afterwards exercised with perplexing doubts for a long season; but at length, after years of impartial, repeated self-examination, he attained to a settled confidence in redeeming grace, which he retained to the end of life." At what time he connected himself with the church is now unknown. It is supposed to have been when he was about fifteen years of age. His conversion was soon succeeded by a purpose to devote himself to the service of God in the ministry.

He was favored with a liberal education at a Collegiate Institution, but his preparation for the ministry was made in a more private manner. A considerable part of his classical and theological education was acquired under the care of Rev. Samuel Blair, at *Fog's Manor*, in Chester county, Pennsylvania. Mr. Blair was an eminent preacher as well as scholar, and several distinguished men in the Church, besides President Davies, received their education under his instruction. His academy was designed mainly to train young men for the ministry, and the course of instruction embraced both the classical and theological departments. Mr. Davies was then probably somewhat less than fifteen years of age. It is supposed that his poverty prevented his remaining there for a longer period. It is an interesting fact that while there, he was supported, in part, as will be mentioned in another place, by funds contributed by the very people of Virginia, among whom he was afterwards settled, but to whom he was at that time wholly unknown. Dr. Finley remarks of him, "His love to God, and tender concern for perishing sinners, excited his eager desire of being in a situation to serve mankind to the best advantage. With this view he engaged in the pursuit of learning, in which, amidst many obvious inconveniences, he

made surprising progress, and, sooner than could have been expected, was found completely qualified for the ministerial office. He passed the usual previous trials with uncommon approbation; having exceeded the raised expectations of his most intimate friends and admirers." He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Castle. His views and feelings, when he was licensed to preach the gospel, may be learned from a fact stated by Dr. Gibbons: "When he was about entering the ministry," says he, "or had not long entered upon it, if I remember right, he was judged to be in a deep and irrecoverable consumption. Finding himself upon the borders of the grave, and without any hopes of recovery, he determined to spend the little remains of an almost exhausted life, as he apprehended it, in endeavoring to advance his Master's glory in the good of souls. Accordingly he removed from the place where he was, to another about an hundred miles distant that was then in want of a minister. Here he labored in season and out of season; and, as he told me, preached in the day, and had his hectic fever by night, and to such a degree as to be sometimes delirious, and to stand in need of persons to sit up with him."

I will here insert an account of the early labors of Mr. Davies in the words of Dr. Hill:

*"From the commencement of Mr. Davies' labors, after his licensure, to his settlement in Virginia, from 1745 to 1748.*

"Mr. Davies was licensed to preach the gospel in 1745, when he was just twenty-one years of age. From the intense application he paid to his studies, his constitution, naturally vigorous, became much impaired, so that when he was licensed, he thought himself and was thought by others, to be laboring under a pulmonary affection which would, in all likelihood, cut short his days. After licensure, Mr. Davies visited many vacancies, some in Pennsylvania, some in Jersey, but chiefly in Maryland. These ministerial visits took place just before and after his first visit to Virginia. The account he gives of them is this. (See Mr. Davies' letter to Bellamy, 1751.)

'In Maryland also, there has been a considerable revival, or shall I not rather call it *a first plantation of religion in Baltimore County*, where, I am informed, Mr. Whittlesey is likely to settle. In Kent County and Queen Anne's, a number of careless sinners



have been awakened and hopefully brought to Christ. The work was begun and chiefly carried on by the instrumentality of that favored man, Mr. Robinson, whose success, whenever I reflect upon it, astonishes me. Oh! he did much in a little time; and who would not choose such an expeditious pilgrimage through this world? There is in these places a considerable congregation, and they have made repeated essays to obtain a settled minister. There was a great stir about religion in Buckingham, a place on the sea shore, about four years ago, (i. e. in the year 1747, the time Mr. D. visited them,) which has since spread and issued in a hopeful conversion in many instances. They want a minister.—But the most glorious displays of divine grace in Maryland have been in and about Somerset County. It began, I think, in 1745, by the ministry of Mr. Robinson, and was afterwards carried on by several ministers that preached transiently there. I was there about two months, [i. e. in 1746 or 1747,] when the work was at its height, and I never saw such a deep and spreading concern: the assemblies were numerous, though in the extremity of a cold winter, and unwearied in attending the word preached;—and frequently there were very few among them that did not give some plain indications of distress or joy. Oh! these were the happiest days that ever my eyes saw.’ Again, says he, ‘after I returned from Virginia, [i. e. in 1747,] I spent near a year under melancholy and consumptive languishment, expecting death. In the spring, 1748, I began slowly to recover, though I then looked upon it only as an intermission of a disorder that would finally prove mortal. But upon the arrival of a messenger from Hanover, I put my life in my hand, and determined to accept their call, hoping I might live to prepare the way for some more useful successor, and willing to expire under the fatigues of duty, rather than involuntary negligence.’

“Thus was Mr. Davies employed, notwithstanding the very delicate and precarious state of his health, from the latter end of the year 1745, when he was licensed, till the spring of 1748, when he located himself permanently in Virginia. He was invited to settle in several other places, which offered advantages far superior to the one he selected, on many accounts. Hear him tell his own story to the Bishop of London upon this subject. ‘And I solemnly assure your Lordship that it was not the secret thirst of

filthy lucre, nor the prospect of any other personal advantage that induced me to settle here in Virginia. For, sundry congregations in Pennsylvania, my native country, and in other northern colonies, most earnestly importuned me to settle among them; where I should have had at least an equal temporal maintenance, incomparably more ease, leisure and peace, and the happiness of the frequent society of my Brethren; and where I should never have made a great noise or bustle in the world, but concealed myself in the crowd of my superior brethren, and spent my life in some little service for God and his church, in some peaceful corner, which would have been most becoming so insignificant a creature, and more agreeable to my recluse natural temper. But all these strong inducements were over-weighed by a sense of the more urgent necessity of the Dissenters here; as they lay two or three hundred miles distant from the nearest ministers of their own denomination, and labored under peculiar embarrassments for the want of a settled minister.' ”

At this stage of the notices of the life of Mr. Davies, when he was about to be settled in Virginia where he exerted so important an influence in the cause of religion, it may be interesting to present a statement of the condition of this colony before he began his labors there. It will be given in the words of Dr. Hill :

*“ A hasty sketch of the state of religion in Virginia shortly before and at the time of Mr. Samuel Davies' settling in that state.*

“ At the time of the death of the Rev. Francis Makemie, which took place in Accomack county, in the year 1708, there were two organized churches in that county, which he had lately collected as Christain societies. One was on a small creek about five miles from Drummondton, the present seat of government for the county, where Mr. Makemie resided upon a valuable estate which he there owned, and where he had a small meeting-house built and licensed as a place of preaching according to the provisions of the Act of Toleration. The other congregation was on and near the mouth of the river Tocomoke, which here constitutes in part the dividing line between Virginia and Maryland. Here also Mr. Makemie owned a large tract of land, extending on both sides of the river, and a large dwelling house, which was now vacant, and which he also got licensed as a place of preaching.

“The members composing this congregation were scattered on both sides of this river. The house first licensed, was on the Virginia side. But a little before his death, by his exertions, a new house of worship was built upon his land, on the Maryland side, at a place now called Rehoboth, which has continued as a place of worship ever since.

“Among other reasons which led to this change of location in their place of worship, no doubt, was a design of getting beyond the reach of Episcopal persecution which universally prevailed in Virginia, and the security of religious freedom which, by charter, was guaranteed to all sects in Maryland.

“There was, at the same time, a small Presbyterian congregation on the Elizabeth River, near where Norfolk now stands, over which the Rev. Mr. Mackey, from Ireland, presided as their minister. But soon after Makemie’s death, he was forced to fly from intolerant persecution, and we hear no more of him or his congregation afterwards.

“After the two small congregations of Accomack lost the labors and protection of Makemie, they were soon extinguished, and were no more heard of. When, therefore, Mr. Davies arrived in Virginia, 1748, just forty years after, there was not a single organized Presbyterian church anywhere to be found in the old settled parts of Virginia.

“About the year 1730, a large number of Scotch-Irish emigrants from Ireland came over into America. This current of immigration became stronger and stronger for many years, and formed a frontier settlement in Pennsylvania, Virginia, North and South Carolina. All these had received a Presbyterian education in Ireland.

“These Presbyterian Irish settlers formed a barrier settlement between the older settlers from England and the Indians of the west.

“The intolerant Episcopalians of Virginia were willing for a while to admit these settlements for their own security from Indian excursions among them, and leave them unmolested in their Presbyterian modes and predilections. Among these western settlements, Presbyterian congregations were formed as early, and in some instances prior to the church which Davies organized in Hanover. A few of these Scotch and Irish settlements were



supplied with ministers from the 'old side' synod of Philadelphia and their presbytery of Donegal. Congregations were formed in Augusta west of the mountains, and two members of the Donegal presbytery were settled there soon after the great schism of 1741, and another congregation was organized east of the Blue ridge, near Rockfish Gap, and another member of Donegal Presbytery located there, before or about the time Mr. Davies settled in Hanover. Incipient steps were taken also to form congregations in Frederick county, and a few other places, about the same time, by the 'new light' synod of New York.

"There was very little intercourse between these western Scotch-Irish and the lower counties of Virginia when Mr. Davies first came to that colony;—their interests, localities, and social intercourse were entirely of a different character. But there was one exception to the last general remark. As the old settlements south of James river did not extend further west of Richmond than about 60 or 70 miles, a portion of those foreign emigrants crossed the mountains at Rockfish Gap, and formed a compact settlement there; while others of them went further south, crossed James river, and formed settlements in what are now called Charlotte and Prince Edward counties. It was to visit these settlements, that the Rev. William Robinson was sent out in the year 1743, by the 'new light' Presbytery of New Brunswick. He preached to the settlements in Frederick, crossed over at Rockfish Gap, and preached to the settlements in Charlotte and Prince Edward counties. From these settlements Mr. Robinson continued his journey south into the western and Irish settlements in North Carolina, and was there overtaken by the commissioners which had been despatched from Hanover to induce him to pay them a visit on his return. This he promised to do, and authorized them to have an appointment made for him on a given Sabbath some weeks afterwards.

"On the Saturday before the Sabbath which Mr. Robinson had appointed to preach in Hanover, he had to ride late at night to reach a tavern, within about 8 or 10 miles of the place. The tavern-keeper was a shrewd, boisterous, profane man; and when uttering some horrid oaths, Mr. Robinson ventured to reprove him for his profanity; and although it was done in a mild way, the innkeeper gave him a sarcastic look, and said, 'Pray, sir,

who are you, to take such authority upon yourself?' 'I am a minister of the gospel,' says Mr. Robinson. 'Then you belie your looks very much,' was the reply. It is said that Mr. Robinson had had the small pox very severely, which had given him a very rough visage, and had deprived him of the sight of one of his eyes. It was with reference to his forbidding appearance that the innkeeper seemed to question his ministerial character. 'But,' says Mr. Robinson, 'if you wish certainly to know whether I am a minister or not, if you will accompany me to such a place, you may be convinced by hearing me preach.' 'I will,' says the innkeeper, 'if you will preach from a text which I shall give you.' 'Let me hear it,' says Mr. Robinson, 'and if there is nothing unsuitable in it, I will.' The waggish tavern-keeper, with the wish of turning him into ridicule, assigned him the text, Psalm cxxxix. 14. 'For I am fearfully and wonderfully made.' Mr. Robinson promised, if he would accompany him, he would preach, among his first sermons, one from that text. He did so, it is said; and before the sermon ended, this wicked man was made to see that he was the monster, and that he was indeed fearfully and wonderfully made himself; and it is said that he became a very pious and useful member of the church. It is thought that President Davies has a reference to his case, among others, in his letter to the Bishop of London, when he says, 'I have been the joyful witness of the happy effects of those four sermons upon sundry thoughtless impenitents and sundry *abandoned profligates*, who have ever since given good evidence of a thorough conversion from sin unto holiness.'

"Seldom did the preaching of the gospel produce such immediate and happy effects as the four sermons which he was allowed to preach at Morris' Reading House. Let this scene be described by one who was competent to do justice to it. 'On the sixth of July, Mr. Robinson preached his first sermon, and continued with us preaching four days successively. The congregation was large the first day, and vastly increased the three following. It is hard for the liveliest imagination to form an idea of the condition of the assembly on those *glorious days of the Son of Man*. Such of us as had been hungering for the word before, were lost in an agreeable surprise and astonishment, and

some could not refrain from publicly declaring their transports. We were overwhelmed with the thoughts of the unexpected goodness of God in allowing us to hear the gospel preached as we never had before, and in a manner which far surpassed our hopes. Many that came through curiosity were pricked to the heart, and but few in the numerous assemblies on these four days appeared unaffected. They returned alarmed with apprehensions of their dangerous condition, convinced of their former entire ignorance of religion, and anxiously inquiring what they should do to be saved. And there is reason to believe, there was as much good, done by these four sermons, as by all the sermons preached in these parts since or before.' Supplies were regularly sent to them until Mr Davies visited them, four years afterwards. It can readily be seen that Mr. Robinson visited them under very favorable circumstances. They had the advantage of giving timely notice of his coming;—they had never heard preaching that was worth the name before;—their minds had for some time been deeply impressed with the necessity and importance of religion;—it was not a mere transient visit, but a protracted meeting of four days and nights' continuance, without intermission;—and it is probable there were few ministers who knew how to handle the word of God more dexterously, and to give to each one his portion in due season. There were daily additions to this little flock of hopeful converts. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed among them.

"We have no right to inquire now what might have been the consequences if Mr. Robinson had been permitted to have prolonged his visit, and extended his labors through the regions round about, which were so white and ripe for the harvest. But he had to make a precipitate retreat, and commence his flight from the sheriffs, who were ordered out for his apprehension, by persecuting Episcopalians.

"As Mr. Robinson had to leave them so hastily and unexpectedly, his many warm friends had no opportunity to contribute anything as a compensation, or even to defray his expenses. A collection was raised the next day, and sent by some trusty friends to overtake him, and put it in his possession. They did overtake him, but he peremptorily refused to receive a penny of it; saying, he knew what his enemies would say if he should re-

ceive any part of it, and he was determined he would give them no occasion to speak evil of either himself or his master's cause, which he advocated. He at last said, there was one condition upon which he would receive the money. He knew a very pious and promising young man, who was in very indigent circumstances, and had been for some years prosecuting his studies for the ministry; he would with their leave expend it upon him, with the promise that if he should enter the ministry, he should come and preach to them. To this they consented. Samuel Davies, then studying under the care of the Rev. Samuel Blair, at Fogg's Manor, Pennsylvania, was this youth; and by his coming and laboring among them, the pledge was redeemed.

"The Episcopal Church of England had been established by law in Virginia, from its first settlement;—the ministers, generally speaking, were men sent from Great Britain to seek their fortunes, or to recover broken ones in America. Although nominally belonging to the see of the Bishop of London, yet, in fact, they were subject to no supervision, amenable for misconduct to no human authority; and it is not wonderful that the most of them were addicted to horse-racing, cock-fighting, card-playing, and drinking, and, in fact, were the mere parasites of the rich and the great. This being generally their character, with here and there rare exceptions, religion was and had long been at a very low ebb. The common people had lost all confidence in their clergy, and were generally ready to hear any pious minister gladly, and would have easily been led off to another church, had they not been restrained by high-handed civil authority. There perhaps could no other people be found where the great mass of the community were more open to conviction and accessible by the gospel, whenever and wherever it was faithfully preached. Thus impressible did Mr. Davies find Virginia when he settled in Hanover. He was the solitary Presbyterian minister of the "new light" order then settled in the colony. The three "old side" ministers who were settled, one in Albemarle, and two in Augusta, were mere drones, and did the cause more injury than benefit, two of whom fell under the heavy censures of the church before their death."

*“The labors Mr. Davies had to undergo, and the difficulties and opposition with which he had to contend, when he first undertook his charge in Virginia.*

“It should be recollected that when Mr. Davies first settled in Virginia, there was not another minister in the same ecclesiastical connection with himself in the whole bounds of Virginia, or within less than between two and three hundred miles of him.

“It is true there were three other Presbyterian ministers who settled in the colony about the same time, and some one or more of them might have preceded him. These were the Rev. Samuel Black, in Albemarle county, near Rock-fish Gap, of the Blue Ridge; the Rev. John Craig, and Alexander Miller, in what was then Augusta county, in the Valley of Virginia, west of the Blue Ridge. But these were old side Presbyterians, and belonged to the old side Presbytery of Donegal and the Synod of Philadelphia, and were so far from rendering him any assistance, that they were among his inveterate enemies and bitterest revilers, as authentic records and testimony of another character can abundantly establish if necessary. There is no better way of making known the task he had undertaken, and the labor he actually did undergo, than to take it from Mr. Davies’ own pen, in his letter addressed to the Bishop of London, dated May 21st, 1752, which was four years after his settlement in Virginia.

“‘The frontier counties of this colony,’ he says, ‘about one hundred miles west and south-west from Hanover, have been lately settled by people that chiefly came from Ireland originally, but immediately from the northern colonies, who were educated Presbyterians, and had been, during their residence there, under the care of ministers belonging to the Synod of New York, of which I am a member. Their settling in Virginia has been many ways beneficial to it, which I am sure, however, most of them would not have done, had they expected any restraints on the inoffensive exercise of their religion, according to their consciences. After their removal, they continued to petition the Synod of New York, and particularly the Presbytery of New Castle, which was nearest to them, for ministers to be sent to them. But as the ministers of the said Synod and of the country were few, and vastly disproportioned to the many congregations under their care, they could not provide these vacancies with settled pastors.



And what could they do in this case? The only expedient in their power was to appoint some of their members to travel alternately into these destitute congregations, and officiate among them as long as would comport with their circumstances.' 'The same method was taken, and for the same reason, to supply the dissenters in and about Hanover, before my settlement among them, and this raised the clamor still higher.

" 'There are now in the frontier counties at least five congregations of Presbyterians, who, though they have long used the most vigorous endeavors to obtain settled ministers among them, have not succeeded yet, by reason of the scarcity of ministers, and the number of vacancies in other parts, particularly in Pennsylvania and the Jerseys; and we have no way to answer their importunate petitions, but by sending a minister now and then to them to officiate transiently among them. And as the people under my charge are so numerous, and so dispersed, that I cannot allow them at each meeting-house such a share of my ministrations as is correspondent to their necessity, the said Synod has twice or thrice in the space of three years, sent a minister to assist me for a few Sabbaths. These are the only itinerations that we have been charged with, in this colony; and whether we should not rather run the risk of this causeless charge, than suffer these vacancies, who eagerly look to us for the bread of life, to perish through a famine of the word of the Lord, who can entertain a doubt?

" 'But as I am particularly accused of intrusive schismatical itinerations, I am more particularly concerned to vindicate myself. It will be necessary therefore to inform your lordship, [addressed to the Bishop of London,] of the circumstances of the dissenters in and about Hanover, who are under my ministerial care.

" 'The dissenters here and hereabout are only sufficiently numerous to form two distinct organized congregations, or particular churches; and did they live contiguous, two meeting-houses would be sufficient for them, and neither they nor myself would desire more. But they are so dispersed, that they cannot convene for public worship, unless they have a considerable number of places licensed;—and yet they are so few, that they cannot form a particular organized church at each place. There are meeting-houses licensed in five different counties in this part of

the state, but the extremes of my charge lie 80 or 90 miles apart; and the dissenters under my care are scattered through six or seven different counties. The greatest number of them, I suppose about 100 families at least, is in Hanover, where there are three meeting-houses licensed. About 20 or 30 families are in Henrico; about 10 or 12 in Caroline; about 15 or 20 in Goochland; and about the same number in Louisa; in each of the four last-mentioned counties there is at this time but one meeting-house licensed. Besides these, there are about 15 or 20 families in Cumberland county, [between 80 or 90 miles from Mr. Davies residence in Hanover,] where there is no place of worship licensed for our use, and about the same number in and about New Kent, where a license was granted by the court of that county, but afterwards recalled by the General Court. [The doctrine advanced by the General Court was, that the act of toleration, if it extended at all to the colonies, did not admit of licensing any place of worship for a dissenting minister, except one in the county where he resided, and where the dissenting member regularly and uniformly attended. This was done to prevent *itinerant preachers*, as they were called, from going from county to county, and making proselytes from the established church of England.]

“ ‘The counties,’ says Mr. Davies in continuance, ‘are large, generally 40 or 50 miles in length, and about 20 or 30 in breadth; so that, though members may live in one county, it would be impossible for them all to convene at one place, and much more so when they are dispersed through so many counties. Though there are now seven places of worship licensed, yet the nearest to each other are 12 or 15 miles apart; and many have to travel from 10, 15, or 20 miles to the nearest, and from 40 to 60 miles to the other places licensed; nay, some of them have from 30 to 40 miles to the nearest place of worship. And such is the scarcity of ministers in the Synod of New York, and so great the number of congregations under their care, that though a part of my congregation with my hearty concurrence, used repeated endeavors to obtain another minister to relieve me of a charge of them, they have not been able to succeed as yet. So that all the dissenters here depend entirely upon me to officiate among them, as there is no other minister of their own denomination within

200 miles or more, except where one of my brethren from the north is appointed to pay them a transient visit for two or three Sabbaths once in a year or two ; and as was observed, they cannot attend on my ministry at more than one or two places, on account of the distance, nor constitute a complete particular church at each place of meeting on account of the smallness of their numbers.'

" These extracts from Mr. Davies' letter to the Bishop of London, may give us a glance of the work he had to perform, and of the opposition against which he had to contend. It was his practice to preach more frequently at one of the meeting-houses in Hanover than at any of the rest of the places. This meeting-house was built near Mr. Morris's reading-house, where Presbyterianism originated, and where they were much more numerous than anywhere else, and near to which Mr. Davies had fixed his residence with his family. But it was his regular custom to preach one Sabbath at least in three or four months, at each of the other places licensed ; for as yet he did not venture to preach in any other place that was not licensed by law. Beside preaching on the Sabbath, he ventured to preach frequently at his different chapels of ease, on weak days, which proved highly beneficial, though it was the ground of heavy charges and strenuous opposition from Episcopal clergymen. The reason for which was, that many Episcopalians, who dare not absent themselves from their own parish church to hear Mr. Davies on the Sabbath, felt no scruple to hear him on a week day—some out of curiosity to hear a man whose fame was now much noised abroad through the country, and many were desirous of hearing him from a much better motive, it is believed. But it is generally believed that more persons were brought under serious impressions by his week day sermons than those of the Sabbath ; and it was chiefly by these meetings that so many were induced to forsake the worship of the established church, which they had found to be so unprofitable in times past, and resort to ordinances which they found more beneficial ; and thus they not only became true Christians, but rapidly increased the number of Presbyterians. This excited the ire, and quickened the opposition of the Episcopalians.

" While Mr. Davies was thus left to labor without any co-ope-

ration from his brethren, except on occasional visits sent by the Synod of New York to aid him two or three Sabbaths, with such intervals as made them few and far between, he was continually extending his labors, and occupying new territory.

"The more he became known, the greater was the crowd that followed after him; until the pressing invitations which he received from various quarters, became almost overwhelming to his sensitive mind.

"When he first came to Virginia, a youthful stranger, the clergy of the establishment affected to treat him with sovereign contempt; several scurrilous lampoons were written against him, and the sarcastic songs which were put into the mouths of drunkards to turn him into ridicule, are remembered by some old people to the present day. It was soon seen that such light weapons as these rather brought him into notice than did him any injury.

"He was now frequently called before the General Court, and the Governor and Council, who seriously threatened to recall the licenses which he had heretofore obtained, and to deny him any of the privileges secured to dissenters by the act of toleration; and not only threatened to banish him the colony, but did actually cause some that were sent to his aid, to depart from the territory.

"He had made himself so great a master of the laws of England, and of his civil and religious rights and privileges, that he was never in the least daunted in answering all their indictments, nor in facing their most able councillors. He always chose to plead his own cause, and acquitted himself in such a manner as made him many friends and admirers, and even his enemies to say, '*What a lawyer was spoiled when Davies took the pulpit!*'

"The home of Mr. Davies was about twelve miles from Richmond; but his occasional labors, as is seen by the above account, were extended through a considerable part of the colony; and he acquired, probably, a greater influence than any other preacher in Virginia ever possessed. The limits of the Presbytery of Hanover originally comprehended the whole of Virginia, and a considerable part, if not the whole of North Carolina. Through this extensive region there were scattered numerous settlements of Protestants. Of this whole interest which 'dissented' from

the then established church of Virginia, Mr. Davies was the animating soul. His popularity in Virginia was almost unbounded; so that he was invited and urged to preach in every part of the colony. The Presbytery to which he belonged, willing to gratify the people as far as in their power, directed him to supply vacancies, with a frequency which came at last to be offensive to the people of his own immediate charge. They warmly remonstrated to the Presbytery against being deprived so much of their pastor's time and labors. To Mr. Davies, however, no blame was attached by either party. He appeared willing to spend and be spent in any service to which duty called him.

"The church in which he preached in Hanover, and which was erected for him in 1757, is still standing. It is about ten miles from the city of Richmond, and is a remarkably plain building, of wood, without a steeple, and capable of accommodating about five hundred persons. In pleasant weather, the number of persons who came to hear him was so great, that the church would not contain them, and worship was held in a neighboring grove."

It was during Mr. Davies' residence in Virginia, that, in company with the Rev. Gilbert Tennant, he was sent to London to solicit donations for the college of New Jersey. Of this visit, Dr. Hill has furnished the following account.

"Mr. Davies' popularity as an eloquent pulpit orator—his able defences before the Governor and General court of Virginia,—his military sermons, and his patriotic addresses upon different important occasions, together with his very able correspondence with the Bishop of London, and other distinguished men in England, had raised his reputation to such a height, that in the year 1753, when the 'new side' Synod, of New York, were looking out for a companion and coadjutor to the Rev. Gilbert Tennant, to send to Great Britain, they could find no one in all their number who was thought to possess qualifications for that undertaking to compare with those possessed by Mr. Davies, who was then but a mere youth, still under thirty years of age.

"Mr. Davies' modesty induced him strongly to remonstrate against devolving such a trust upon him;—and his people felt still stronger objections to this appointment. . They knew how



important his services were at that critical period in their affairs, and that no one else could supply his place with equal advantage. Besides this, they had another objection. They knew his excellencies better than any other people, for he came to them when a youth, and it was among them that his powers had ripened; and they were afraid if he became extensively known, he would be sought after by other places, which could afford him a much easier and more comfortable settlement than they could, and that they would thereby endanger the loss of him altogether.

“Subsequent events, which soon after followed, showed how well-founded their fears and apprehensions were. Although the Synod took care to have Mr. Davies’ people supplied during the year of his absence, yet no one could, in their estimation, render services equivalent to his. It is generally thought that the progress of Presbyterianism was seriously affected by Mr. Davies’ absence from Virginia, and that its prospects were hardly ever as promising afterwards as before.

“What was the precise amount of funds raised by this embassy to Great Britain; the mode of their operations; whether they went together, or separated, and took different routes, is not known. They visited England, Scotland, and Ireland; and there is no doubt they raised a considerable amount, and enlisted many friends and patrons for Princeton Seminary—as that institution rose rapidly into notice and usefulness from that time. When Mr. Davies was in London, his fame had preceded him, so that his preaching was much resorted to by dissenters and others; and an occurrence is said to have taken place which was much spoken of among his friends, and with some little exultation, after his return.

“The circumstance alluded to is this—that his fame as a pulpit orator was so great in London, that some noblemen who had heard him, mentioned in the presence of King George II., that there was a very distinguished dissenting preacher in London from the colony of Virginia, who was attracting great notice, and drawing after him very crowded audiences; upon which the King expressed a strong desire to hear him, and his chaplain invited him to preach in his chapel. Mr. Davies is said to have complied, and preached before a splendid audience, composed of

the royal family, and many of the nobility of the realm. It is further said, that while Mr. D. was preaching, the King was seen speaking at different times to those around him, who were seen also to smile. Mr. Davies observed it, and was shocked at what he thought was irreverence in the house of God, that was utterly inexcusable in one whose example might have such influence. After pausing and looking sternly in that direction several times, the preacher proceeded in his discourse, when the same offensive behavior was still observed. The American dissenter is said then to have exclaimed, '*When the lion roars, the beasts of the forest all tremble; and when King Jesus speaks, the princes of the earth should keep silence.*' The King is said to have given a significant, but courteous bow to the preacher, and sat very composedly and reverently during the rest of the service. If this be a correct statement of the fact that took place, it speaks louder than anything that has yet been said in praise of Mr. Davies' promptness, intrepidity, and solemn self-possession while engaged in delivering God's messages to his perishing fellow-men. Whatever authority Mr. Davies' friends had for narrating this story is not now known, but it was universally believed among them to have occurred.

"The explanation given of this strange affair is this. The King is said to have been so enraptured with Mr. Davies' solemn and impressive manner and eloquence, that he was constrained repeatedly to express his astonishment and applause to those around him, and felt anything else but irreverence upon the occasion. He was so delighted with him, that he sent him an invitation to call upon him at a given time, which interview unquestionably did take place, and was repeated more than once, after which, and the explanations which were given, Mr. Davies was delighted with his Majesty, and not only received a handsome donation from him for the college whose cause he was advocating, but was led to form a most exalted opinion of George II. ever afterwards, as may be learned from a funeral sermon he preached upon his death and character."

The following account by Dr. Hill, will furnish an interesting and useful account of "*the style and manner of Mr. Davies*"

*preaching, the effects produced ; and the influence which he acquired.*

“ Mr Davies possessed naturally every qualification, both of body and mind, to make him an accomplished orator, and fit him for the pulpit. His frame was tall, well-proportioned, erect, and comely ;—his port and carriage were easy, graceful, manly, and dignified ;—his voice clear, loud distinct, melodious, and well-modulated ;—and his natural genius was strong and masculine ; his understanding clear ; his memory retentive ; his invention quick ; his imagination sprightly and florid, his thoughts sublime ; and his language elegant, strong and expressive. His temper or disposition was naturally modest, diffident, and retiring ; but when roused by difficulties, or strongly urged by a sense of duty, he was, from a consciousness of his mental resources, enterprising bold, and fearless. He was remarkably neat and tasteful in his dress, and dignified and polite in his manners. A distinguished character of the day, in seeing him walk through a court-yard once, said, *‘ he looked like the ambassador of some great king.’*

“ Mr. Davies wrote and prepared his sermons with great care : this he was enabled to do, notwithstanding the great and multiplied pastoral duties which he had to perform, from the fact that he had so many places of preaching, and that they were so wide apart, that one sermon could be preached throughout his extensive range, without much danger of any of his hearers having heard the same discourse twice. His common practice was to take his manuscripts with him into the pulpit, and make more or less use of them in delivering his discourses. But his memory was such, and the frequent use he was permitted to make of the same sermon rendered it so familiar that he was never trammelled in his delivery. Though this was his common practice yet he would sometimes extemporize to very happy effect. One of his confidential elders once said to him—*‘ Mr. Davies, how is it, that you, who are so well informed upon all theological subjects, and can express yourself with so much ease and readiness, upon any subject, and in any company, and have language so at your command, should think it necessary to prepare and write your sermons with so much care, and take your notes into the pulpit, and make such constant use of them ? Why do you not,*

like many other preachers, oftener preach extempore?' Mr. Davies' reply was this:—'I always thought it to be a most awful thing to go into the pulpit and there speak nonsense in the name of God. Besides, when I have an opportunity of preparing, and neglect to do so, I am afraid to look up to God for assistance, for that would be to ask him to countenance my negligence. But when I am evidently called upon to preach, and have had no opportunity to make suitable preparation, if I see it clearly to be my duty, I am not afraid to try to preach extempore, and I can with confidence look up to God for assistance.'

"No one can be at a loss to know what was the style of Mr. Davies' preaching, who has ever read his printed sermons, for they are *verbatim*, as he delivered them, and no doubt were printed from the very manuscripts which he used in the pulpit. It should not be thought wonderful if such sermons, accompanied with his dignified appearance—appropriate gestures—clear, well modulated and melodious voice, should have interested the people, and insured him overwhelming congregations. His preaching was intelligible and attractive to people of every class and condition—the high and the low, the rich and the poor. He had an unusual popularity among the poor illiterate slaves; took great pains with them, and spent much time in having them taught to read, and furnishing them with Bibles and hymn books, and other suitable books. When he left Virginia, it is probable his colored communicants were more numerous than the white. The writer of this has known many of his black members, and they have always been esteemed by their masters as servants of a superior order; which secured to them not only the friendship and confidence of their owners, but treatment more like Christian brethren than slaves.

"Mr. Davies, in his letters to Mr. Bellamy and others, speaks very discouragingly of his success, especially as contrasted with the effects produced before his arrival, by the four days' preaching of Mr. Robinson; but he evidently does not do himself justice by such remarks and comparisons. Mr. Robinson's labors were all employed at one place, in Hanover, among the same people, and without any intermission. It is natural, therefore, without overlooking the supernatural aids of divine grace, to expect that instrumentalities, thus employed, should produce more

visible effects than if the same means had been spread over as many different counties, among different sets of hearers, and with considerable intervals of time between the sermons. The fruits of Mr. Robinson's labors were visible at once, but upon a very limited scale, compared with the extensive field over which Mr. Davies had not only to scatter the seed, but to prepare the soil by subduing the thorns and noxious weeds. No doubt much of Mr. Davies' work was lost, because he had always to hurry away to some other part of his extensive bounds. Those that came after Mr. Davies, were better able to judge of his usefulness than he was himself at the time. There was no remarkable revival of religion during his ministry, but there was a gradual increase, and a growing and deepening impression of the necessity and importance of religion. If he could have devoted his labors, and concentrated his energies, upon a smaller field, no doubt there would have been more visible fruits seen; but whether he did not perform a greater and better work, by preparing an extensive field for many laborers to come after and gather the fruits, is a question of no easy solution. Mr. Davies was but the pioneer for Presbyterianism and vital piety in Virginia; and his mysterious and speedy removal to another sphere, just as his prospects in Virginia began to brighten, has to many appeared of very questionable propriety."

Mr. Davies continued in the field of labor in Virginia, until he was elected to the Presidency of the College of New Jersey, in the year 1759. He was chosen to succeed President Edwards. President Burr died in September, 1757; President Edwards was elected soon after, but was not inducted into office until February, 1758, and died in the March following. Mr. Davies was inaugurated as President in July, 1759, and continued in the office until his death, on the 4th of February, 1761. He "preached his farewell sermon to his people, June 1st, 1769. The effect produced upon the minds of his people can neither be conceived nor expressed. Despondency and gloom hung over the whole assembly, and the distress and surprise with many were too great to admit of the relief which a flood of tears might afford. The consternation was nearly as great with the Presbytery, for a paralyzing discouragement seemed to have possessed all in Vir-



ginia who were concerned in this matter ; after which everything of a religious nature seemed to decline. Ichabod seemed to be written, not only on his own congregation, but on the entire Presbytery ; from which it has hardly ever recovered since. His congregation in Hanover began at once to dwindle away by death, but more frequently by removals to the upper counties, where the soil and climate were more inviting. Perhaps God saw it was necessary ; for if ever a people were guilty of man worship, they were ; and sorely did they pay for it.”—DR. HILL.

It is as a *preacher*, particularly, that it is proper to contemplate him in an “ Introduction ” to his Sermons : and all that is needful, therefore, to say of his character as the President of a College, is, that he equalled the most sanguine expectations of his friends ; and that, at his death, he left the College in as high a state of literary merit as it had ever been in since its first institution. A more full account of his efforts to benefit the College, and of his success, may be found in the Appendix to Dr. Green’s “ Discourses, delivered in the College of New Jersey, addressed chiefly to candidates for the first degree in the arts.” Pp. 350–355. He died from an inflammatory fever, after an illness of two days, which was supposed to have been caused mainly by his having been unskilfully bled. His death was probably hastened, as he had been predisposed to disease, by his unremitting application to study, and to the duties of his office. His previous situation had afforded little leisure, and comparatively few means, for the cultivation of general science. To qualify himself for his new station, therefore, his application to study became intense and unremitted. This fact, and the fact that during his residence in Princeton, he had almost wholly neglected the exercise to which he had been accustomed in Virginia, contributed to render the disease incurable. During his brief illness, the violence of the disease was such as almost wholly to deprive him of the exercise of reason.

“ His faltering tongue was, however, continually uttering some expedient to promote the prosperity of the Church of Christ, and the good of mankind.”

His remains lie in the churchyard in Princeton, by the side of Presidents Burr, Edwards, Finley, and Witherspoon. The following inscription is recorded on the stone which marks his grave :—

Sub hoc in marmore sepulchrali  
 Mortales Exuviæ  
 Reverendi perquam viri,  
 SAMUELIS DAVIES, A.M.  
 Collegii Nov-Cæsariensis Præsidis,  
 Futurum Domini Adventum præstolantur.  
 Ne te, viator, ut pauca de tanto  
 Tamque dilecto vivo resciscas,  
 Paulisper morari pigeat.  
 Natus est in Comitatu de Newcastle, juxta Delaware,  
 iii. Novembris, Anno Salutis reparatæ,  
 MDCCXXIV. S.V.  
 Sacris ibidem initiatus, xix. Februarii,  
 MDCCXLVII.  
 Tutelam pastorem Ecclesiæ  
 In Comitatu de Hanover, Virginiensium, suscepit.  
 Ibi per xi. plus minus Annos,  
 Ministri evangelici laboribus  
 Indefesse, et favente Numine, auspicato perfunctus.  
 Ad munus Præsidiale Collegii Nov-Cæsariensis gerendum  
 Vocatus est, et inauguratus, xxvi. Julii,  
 MDCCLIX. S.N.  
 Sed, proh Rerum inane! intra Biennium, Febre correptus,  
 Candidam animam cælo reddidit, iv. Februarii, MDCCLXI  
 Heu quam exiguum Vitæ Curriculum!  
 Corpore fuit eximio; Gestu liberali, placido, augusto.  
 Ingenii Nitore,  
 Morum Integritate, Munificentia, Facilitate,  
 Inter paucos illustris.  
 Rei literariæ peritus; Theologus promptus, perspicax.  
 In Rostris, per Eloquentium blandum, mellitum,  
 Vehemens simul, et perstringens, nulli secundus.  
 Scriptor ornatus, sublimis, disertus.  
 Præsertim vero Pietate,  
 Ardente in Deum Zelo et Religione spectandus.  
 In tanti viri, majora meriti,  
 Memoriam duraturam,  
 Amici hoc quaecunque monumentum,  
 Honoris ergo, et Gratiutudinis, posuere  
 Abi, viator, ei æmulare.

The characteristics of President Davies as a preacher, were such as the following :

1. He was eminent for zeal and ardor. This was evinced in all his ministry, and is apparent in his printed sermons. He gave his whole soul to the work, and did nothing languidly or sluggishly. His ardor and zeal prompted him to untiring diligence ; to a readiness to preach whenever he had an opportunity ; and to the burning thoughts and expressions which characterize his sermons. The same ardor led him to make a diligent use of all the means at his command for qualifying himself for wider usefulness, and making the most of the eminent natural endowments with which he had been favored. As a specimen of his ardor in preaching, the following statement of his own feelings will furnish an interesting illustration :

“ I desire seriously to devote to God and my dear country, all the labors of my head, my heart, my hand, and pen ; and if he pleases to bless any of them, I hope I shall be thankful, and wonder at his condescending grace. Oh ! my dear brother, could we spend and be spent all our lives, in painful, disinterested, indefatigable service for God and the world, how serene and bright would it render the swift approaching eve of life ! I am laboring to do a little to save my country, and, which is of much more consequence, to save souls from death—from that tremendous kind of death, which a *soul* can die. I have had but little success of late, but blessed be God, it surpasses my expectation, and much more my desert. Some of my brethren labor to better purpose. The pleasure of the Lord prospers in their hands.”

Another epistle tells me, “ As for myself, I am just striving not to live in vain. I entered the ministry with such a sense of my unfitness for it, that I had no sanguine expectations of success. And a condescending God (O, how condescending !) has made me much more serviceable than I could hope. But, alas ! my brother, I have but little, very little true religion. My advancements in holiness are extremely small : I feel what I confess, and am sure it is true, and not the rant of excessive or affected humility. It is an easy thing to make a noise in the world, to flourish and harangue, *to dazzle the crowd and set them all agape* ; but deeply to imbibe the spirit of Christianity, to maintain a secret walk with God, to be holy as he is holy, this is the la-

bor, this the work. I beg the assistance of your prayers in so grand and important an enterprise. The difficulty of the ministerial work seems to grow upon my hands. Perhaps once, in three or four months, I preach in some measure as I could wish; that is, I preach as in the sight of God, and as if I were to step from the pulpit to the supreme tribunal. I *feel* my subject. I melt into tears or I shudder with horror, when I denounce the terrors of the Lord. I glow, I soar in sacred ecstasies, when the love of Jesus is my theme, and, as Mr. Baxter was wont to express it, in lines more striking to me than all the fine poetry in the world,

‘I preach as if I ne’er should preach again;  
And as a dying man to dying men.’

But, alas! my spirits soon flag, my devotions languish, and my zeal cools. It is really an afflictive thought, that I serve so good a Master with so much inconstancy; but so it is, and my soul mourns upon that account.

“I am just beginning to creep back from the valley of the shadow of death, to which I made a very near approach a few days ago. I was seized with a most violent fever, which came to a crisis in a week; and now it is much abated, though I am still confined to my chamber. In this shattered state, my trembling hand can write but little to you; and what I write will be languid and confused, like its author. But as the Virginia fleet is about to sail, and I know not when I shall have another opportunity, I cannot avoid writing something. I would sit down on the grave’s mouth, and talk awhile with my favorite friend; and from my situation you may foresee what subjects my conversation will turn upon—Death—Eternity—the Supreme Tribunal.

“Blessed be my master’s name, this disorder found me employed in his service. It seized me in the pulpit—like a soldier wounded in the field. This has been a busy summer with me. In about two months I rode about five hundred miles, and preached about forty sermons. This affords me some pleasure in the review. But, alas! the mixture of sin and many nameless imperfections that run through and corrupt all my services, give me shame, sorrow, and mortification. My fever made unusual ravages upon my understanding, and rendered me frequently de-

lirious, and always stupid. But, when I had any little sense of things, I generally felt pretty calm and serene; and death, that mighty terror, was disarmed. Indeed, the thought of leaving my dear family destitute, and my flock shepherdless, made me often start back and cling to life; but in other respects death appeared a kind of indifference to me. Formerly I have wished to live longer, that I might be better prepared for Heaven; but this consideration had but very little weight with me, and that for a very unusual reason, which was this: After long trial, I found this world is a place so unfriendly to the growth of every thing Divine and Heavenly, that I was afraid, if I should live longer, I should be no better fitted for Heaven than I am. Indeed, I have hardly any hopes of ever making any great attainments in holiness while in this world, though I should be doomed to stay in it as long as *Methuselah*. I see other Christians, indeed, around me, make some progress, though they go on with but a snail-like motion; but when I consider that I set out about twelve years old, and what sanguine hopes I then had of my future progress, and yet that I have been almost at a stand ever since, I am quite discouraged. O my good master, if I may dare to call thee so, I am afraid I shall never serve thee much better on this side the region of perfection. The thought grieves me: it breaks my heart, but I can hardly hope better. But if I have the least spark of true piety in my breast, I shall not always labor under this complaint. No, my Lord, I shall yet serve thee—serve thee through an immortal duration—with the activity, the fervor, the perfection of *the rapt seraph that adores and burns*. I very much suspect this desponding view of the matter is wrong; and I do not mention it with approbation, but only relate it as an unusual reason for my willingness to die, which I never felt before, and which I could not suppress.

“In my sickness, I found the unspeakable importance of a Mediator in a religion for sinners. O! I could have given you the word of a dying man for it, that that Jesus, whom you preach, is indeed a necessary, and an all-sufficient Savior. Indeed, he is the only support for a departing soul. *None but CHRIST—none but CHRIST!* Had I as many good works as *Abraham* or *Paul*, I would not have dared to build my hopes upon such a quicksand, but only on this firm eternal rock.



"I am rising up, my brother, with a desire to recommend him better to my fellow-sinners than I have done. But, alas! I hardly hope to accomplish it. He has done a great deal more by me already than I ever expected, and infinitely more than I deserved. But he never intended me for great things. He has beings, both of my own and of superior orders, that can perform him more worthy service. O! if I might but untie the latchet of his shoes, or draw water for the service of his sanctuary, it is enough for me. I am no angel, nor would I murmur because I am not.

"My strength fails me, and I must give over. Pray for me write to me. Love me, living and dying, on earth and in heaven."

2. He was distinguished for an imagination singularly rich and sublime. He was himself a poet, and the characteristics of a poetic genius are seen in rich abundance on the pages of his sermons. His language is elevated, glowing, and warm from the heart; and the scenes which he describes are placed before the mind with a most vivid reality. Occasionally, indeed, there is a luxuriance amounting to redundancy in the images which he uses, and a want of care in his style, which he probably would himself have corrected, had he lived to a more mature age, or had he lived to publish his sermons himself. Indeed, there are some expressions in his discourse on the General Judgment, which now would be regarded as bordering on the ludicrous; and which a more chastened imagination, or a severe criticism, would have removed. His sermons, moreover, are not distinguished for minute accuracy of language, or those terse periods which many later compositions of the same kind possess. Occasionally, also, we meet with something that appears loose, tumid and declamatory. The general tenor of the sentences, however, is harmonious; and there is such an unction of piety and popularity of manner; there are so elevated conceptions, and such a variety of beautiful images, that the minor imperfections are forgotten, and the reader is borne along with the subject, charmed by the happy union of genius and piety everywhere apparent. When delivered by a man of the noble bearing, the fine form, the eloquent gesticulation, the fervor of manner, and the *heart* and *soul* of such a man as Mr. Davies, it is easy to understand

the reason why he had so commanding an influence over a popular audience, and why he was characterized as "the prince of preachers."

3. He was distinguished for strong and vigorous sense; for just thinking, powerful reasoning, and pungent addresses to the conscience and the heart. In an argument, the hearer is conducted from point to point by a clear chain of connected reasoning, and every position is sustained; and in direct appeals to men, the conscience is made to respond to the claims which the preacher urges. Under the delivery of these sermons, it would have been impossible for a well-educated and thinking skeptic not to feel that there was much in Christianity which demanded his attention, or for any man not to feel that religion had claims on the conscience and the heart superior to all other claims.

4. President Davies was a man who regarded ample preparation as indispensable for the successful performance of the duties of the ministry. His sermons bear the marks of having been prepared with great care; and we know what were his views on that subject. He possessed uncommon facility for making attainments in his studies, and gained knowledge with an ease with which few are favored; but still, the consciousness of this never deterred him from intense application, and from the use of all the means in his power for enlarging the boundaries of his attainments. He is known to have declared, that "every discourse of his, which he thought worthy of the name of a sermon, cost him four days' hard study in the preparation." It was owing to this toil, as well as to the extraordinary talents with which he had been endowed, that he became, perhaps, the most eloquent and accomplished pulpit orator that this country has produced; that he was more successful in winning souls to the Redeemer than any other minister of the age in which he lived, if we except, perhaps, Whitfield and Edwards; and that his sermons have been probably more popular than any other sermons which have ever issued from the American press. Before the year 1800, nine editions had been published; and it would be difficult to estimate the number that have been issued in Great Britain and in this country. When the size and expense of

the work is considered, and when it is remembered that his sermons are almost wholly posthumous in their publication, such an expression of the public favor is the most conclusive proof of their value.

5. President Davies was a warm and ardent friend of revivals of religion. The age in which he lived was characterized eminently by such works of grace, and his heart sympathized with those who prayed for them, and who were blessed with them. He sympathized with the Tennents, and with Edwards and Bellamy, in their views of such displays of the divine power, and nothing gave him more joy than the evidence of the presence of the Spirit of God attending the preaching of the gospel with a blessing. The following extract from a letter to a friend in England on this subject, lays open the secrets of his soul in reference to revivals of religion.

“The best news that perhaps I ever heard in my life, I lately received from my favorite friend, Mr. Samuel Finley, minister of Nottingham, in Pennsylvania, tutor of a large academy, and one of the trustees of the college of New Jersey. I had sent him some extracts from my British letters, giving an account of the revival of religion in sundry parts of England, particularly among the clergy: in answer to which he writes thus:

“‘April 16, 1757. I greatly rejoice that our Lord Jesus has put it in my power to make you a large compensation for the good news you sent me. God has done great things for us. Our glorious Redeemer poured out his Holy Spirit upon the students of our college; not one of all who were present neglected—and they were in number sixty. The whole house, say my correspondents, was a Bochim. Mr. William Tennent, who was on the spot, says, he “never saw any in that case who had more clear views of God, themselves, and their defects—their impotence and misery, than they had in general: that there never was, he believes, in any house, more genuine sorrow for sin, and longing after Jesus: that this glorious work was gradual, and spread like the increasing light of the morning: that it was not begun by the ordinary methods of preaching, nor promoted by alarming methods; yet so great was their distress, that he judged it improper to use any arguments of terror in public, lest

some should sink under the weight: that what makes the gracious visitation more remarkable was, that a little before, some of the youth had given a greater loose to their corruptions than was ordinary among them; a spirit of pride and contention prevailing, to the great grief and even discouragement of the worthy President: that there were no public outcries, but a decorous, silent solemnity; that before he came away, several had received something like the spirit of adoption; being tenderly affected with the sense of redeeming love, and thereby disposed and determined to endeavor after universal holiness."

"Mr. Treat and Mr. G. Tennent tell me in theirs, that the concern appeared rational, solid, and scriptural; and that in a remarkable degree. I was informed by some of the students who had been my pupils, that this religious concern first began with the son of a very considerable gentleman of New York. The youth was dangerously sick at college; and on that occasion, awakened to a sense of his guilt. His discourse made some impression on a few others, and theirs again on more; so that it became almost general, before the good President, or any others, knew anything of it. As soon as it became public, misrepresentations were spread abroad; and some gentleman sent to bring their sons home. But upon better information, the most were sent back again. The wicked companions of some young gentlemen, left no methods untried to recover them to their former excess of riot; and with two or three have been lamentably successful.

"Mr. Duffield (a worthy young minister) informed me the other day, that a very hopeful religious concern spread through the Jerseys, especially among young people. In several letters from Philadelphia, from Mr. G. Tennent and others, I have an assurance of a revival there for which good people are blessing God. Lawyer Stockton informs me, that he is certified by good authority, of a gracious work of God at Yale College, in New Haven.'

"This, sir, is some of the best news from one of the best of my correspondents. You will join with me in blessing God, and congratulating posterity, upon this happy, surprising revolution, in a college to which the eager eyes of so many churches look for supplies. Perhaps it may afford me the more pleasure, as my

having taken so much pains to promote that institution, gives me a kind of paternal solicitude for it, though I live near four hundred miles from it.

“The finger of God is the more conspicuous in this affair, as the students, who had so often heard such excellent sermons from the worthy President, and from the many ministers from various parts, who have occasionally officiated there, without any general good effects, should be universally awakened by means of a sick boy. Though this college was well founded, and well conducted, yet I must own, I was often afraid it was degenerating into a college of mere learning. But now my fears are removed, by the prospect that sincere piety, that grand ministerial qualification, will make equal advances.”

6. President Davies was an ardent and devoted friend of his country. He lived in the forming period of our history, and he exerted his great influence in vindication of his country's rights. The country was alarmed and agitated to the highest degree by the French and Indian war, while he was a pastor in Virginia. There was even much talk of abandoning a part of the colony of Virginia to the enemy. On the 10th of July, 1755, General Braddock sustained his memorable defeat, and the remnant of his army was saved by the courage and skill of Colonel Washington, then only twenty-three years old. On the 20th of this month, Mr. Davies preached a sermon “On the defeat of General Braddock, going to Fort Du Quesne.” In this sermon, he calls on all his hearers, in the most impassioned and animating strains, to show “themselves men, Britons and Christians, and to make a noble stand for the blessings they enjoyed.” It was feared the negroes would rise up and join the French. His influence among the blacks was greater, perhaps, than that of any other man; and he used it all to persuade and deter them from joining the enemy. In August, of the same year, he delivered a sermon in Hanover, to Captain Overton's company of independent volunteers, under the title of “Religion and patriotism the constituents of a good soldier.” It was in a note to his sermon, that he expressed the hope, which has been so often since noticed in regard to Washington. “As a remarkable instance of this [of the fact that God had ‘diffused some sparks of martial fire through



the country"], I may point out," said he, "to the public that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved, in so signal a manner, *for some important service to his country.*"

"The celebrated Patrick Henry," says Dr. Green, "is known to have spoken in terms of enthusiasm of Mr. Davies. And as that great statesman and powerful orator lived from his eleventh to his twenty-second year, in the neighborhood where his patriotic sermons were delivered, and which produced effects as powerful as those ascribed to Demosthenes himself, it has been supposed, with much probability, that it was Mr. Davies who first kindled the fire, and afforded the model of Henry's elocution."

As a preacher, President Davies was eminently fitted to the times in which he lived. He was one of the great men whom God raised up at that time to impress their features on the age, and to mould the opinions of their countrymen. He was such a preacher as the times then demanded, and such a preacher, in the great features of his ministry, as *this* age also demands; and had he lived now, he would have fallen in with, or rather would have been a leader in all that is good that characterizes this generation. It is not presumption, nor should it pass for mere conjecture, to say, that with the advantages which we now enjoy, he would have been an eminently close student of the Bible; a friend of the great enterprises of Christian benevolence; an advocate of temperance and of revivals; an enemy of wild and visionary views, of strife, and bigotry and schism; as a man of charity and liberality of sentiment; a preacher disposed to unite with all who love the Lord Jesus, in efforts to do good; and a friend of Christian liberty and peace.

On occasion, therefore, of issuing these sermons again from the press, and of bringing before the public mind and heart the name of an American so distinguished as he was, I have thought it would not be inappropriate to suggest some thoughts in connection with this publication, on *the kind of preaching that this age demands, or the kind of ministry fitted to the times in which we live.* The importance of this subject, with reference to the welfare of our country, and the interest which is everywhere felt in it, will furnish, it is hoped, an apology for such suggestions. The subject itself is such, that no one can over-estimate its im-

portance; and he who contributes any thoughts that may be of even inconsiderable value in themselves, is doing something to serve his generation. Believing that the edition of the sermons of Davies now issued will have an extensive circulation, it is not denied that the hope is cherished, in making these suggestions, to reach some minds that could not otherwise be accessible, and to do something to elevate the prevailing views of the sacredness and the importance of the office of the Christian ministry. The suggestions are submitted with deference, particularly to those who are candidates for this high office, and who are inquiring with solicitude what shall be the great object of their aim in the work to which they have devoted their lives.

It has been comparatively rare, in this world, that any individual has embarked on life, or on any enterprise, with a determined purpose to see how much could be done by the utmost efforts of which the mind and the body could be made capable. Occasionally such an individual has appeared; and appeared to astonish us no less by the vastness and the success of his own efforts, than by the proof which he has thus furnished of the imbecility, and indolence, and wasted talents of that great mass of mankind. Such a man was Howard—living to make “full proof” of how much could be done in a single object of benevolence. “The energy of his determination,” it has been said, “was the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds; as a great river, in its customary state, is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent.”\* Such a man, in a far different department was Napoleon; living to illustrate the power of great talents concentrated on a single object, and making “full proof” of the terrible energy of the single passion of ambition. Such a man, too, was the short-lived Alexander; and, in a different sphere, such a man was Paul; and, to a considerable extent, such a man was Whitfield. But, compared with the immense

\* Foster's Essay on “Decision of Character.”

multitude of minds which have existed on the earth, such instances, for good or evil, have been rare. A part has been sunk in indolence from which no motives would rouse them. Part have been wholly unconscious of their own powers. Part have never been placed in circumstances to call forth their energies, or have not been endowed with original power to *create* such circumstances, or to start a plan that should require such concentrated efforts to complete it. Part have never been under the right influence, in the process of training, to make "full proof" of the powers of the soul; part have wasted their talents in wild and visionary schemes, unconscious of the waste, or of the main error of their life, till life was too far gone to attempt to repair the loss;—some are thwarted by a rival; some meet with discouragements, are early disheartened, and give up all effort in despair. Most reach the close of life, feeling, if they have any right feeling, that they have accomplished almost nothing—the good usually with the reflection, that if they ever accomplish much, it must now be in a higher state of being. Even Grotius, one of the most laborious and useful of men, is said to have exclaimed near the close of his life, "*Proh vitam perdidit, operosè nihil agendo.*"

What I have remarked of individual powers, is true also of associated intellects, and of institutions designed to act on mankind. Full proof has never yet been made of the power of the church to sanctify and save the world; of the Bible to elevate the human intellect, to purify the heart, and to change the social habits, laws, and morals of mankind; of the Sabbath to arrest the bad influences that set in upon man from the world, and to promote order, happiness, and salvation; and of the ministry to save souls from death. There has been a vast amount of undeveloped power in all these to affect mankind; and the past furnishes us in some bright periods with glimpses of what is yet to be the living reality, but the full proof remains to benefit and to bless some future age.

The qualifications for the Christian ministry, in all ages, and in all places, are essentially the same. The same great doctrines are to be preached; the same plan of salvation to be explained and defended; the same duties toward God, and toward man, in the various relations of life, to be inculcated. The hu-

man heart is, in all ages, and climes, and nations, essentially the same; and men are everywhere to be saved in the same way. Man, "no matter whether an Indian, an African," an European or an American sun has shown upon him, is a sinner. He comes into existence a fallen being. He enters on his immortal career ruined by the apostasy of the progenitor of the race. He commences life, certain that he will begin to sin as soon as he begins to act; and will sin on forever in this world and the next, unless he is redeemed by atoning blood, and renewed and sanctified by the Spirit of God. For him there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Son of God in human nature—a vicarious offering for the sins of men. In that great Savior there is hope; in him there is full redemption; and by his merits only can a sinner be justified and stand before God.

Each successive generation is to be met with this gospel; and on each individual the influences of the Holy Ghost are to be sought, that his heart may be renewed, and his soul saved. The great system teaching the fall and ruin of man; the doctrine of the threefold existence of the divine nature; the incarnation and the atonement of the Son of God; the necessity of regeneration by the holy Spirit; the necessity of holy living; the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, is to be proclaimed from age to age, and from land to land.

The first essential qualification for this work, everywhere and always, is **PIETY**. The minister should be a converted man. He should not merely be a moral man, or an amiable man, or a gifted man, or a learned man, or a serious-minded man, or a man desirous of being converted; he should be a regenerated man. He should have such evidence on that point as not to have his own mind embarrassed and perplexed on it; such as never to leave a doubt amounting to "a shadow of a shade" on the mind of others. He should have confidence in God. He should have no doubt of the truth of the system which he defends; he should have no doubt that God intends to bless that system of truth which he preaches to save the world. At all times; in all lands; in every variety of the fluctuating customs and laws among mankind, the ministers of the gospel should be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;" they should be "blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behavior"—or *modest* (marg.)—*κόσμιον*—

“given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine—*μὴ πάροικος*—(marg. ‘not ready to quarrel, and offer wrong as one in wine’—‘not sitting long *by* wine,’ *Robinson*); no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, not a brawler, not covetous; he should not be a novice—(marg. ‘one newly come to the faith’—*νιόφύτον*); and he *must* have a good report of them which are without. In all ages and places, the ministers of the gospel are to preach the word; they are to be instant in season, out of season; they are to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine—(*διδασκαλία*, *teaching*); they are to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering; they are to be lovers of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; they are to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; they are to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life; they are to watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of evangelists, make full proof of their ministry.”

Never were the general qualifications of the ministry better drawn by an uninspired pen than in the well-known words of Cowper:

“Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,  
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,  
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace  
 His master-strokes, and draw from his design;  
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere;  
 In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,  
 And plain in manner, decent, solemn, chaste  
 And natural in gesture; much impressed  
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,  
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds  
 May feel it too; affectionate in look,  
 And tender in address, as well becomes  
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.”

TASK, B. II.

But while it is true that the qualifications for the Christian ministry are always essentially the same, it is also true that different countries, ages, and fields of labor require peculiar endowments in those who minister at the altar. Some great duty or class of duties in one age or country shall demand peculiarly to be inculcated; some gigantic form of wickedness is to be met and overthrown; some far-spreading and subtle error is to be de-



tected and removed ; some great enterprise for the welfare of man is to be originated, vindicated, and sustained ; or some propensity of the age or country shall need to be counteracted and opposed by all the power and talent of the Christian ministry. In the times of the apostles, great energy of character was demanded ; great self-denial and readiness to meet privation and danger ; and great wisdom in standing up to oppose the systems of philosophy which had so long reigned over the human mind. A spirit of noble enterprise and bold daring was demanded, to cross seas and lands ; to encounter perils and storms ; to be ready to stand on trial before kings, and to meet death in any form, in such a way as to do honor to religion. The prevailing systems of religion were sustained by all the wisdom of philosophy, and by all the power of the civil arm ; and the very boldness of the new preachers, their zeal and disinterestedness, and consciousness of having the truth, was to strike dismay into the friends of idolatry, and under God to change the religion of the world. Such men were found in Paul and his fellow-laborers ; men great in all the essential qualifications of the sacred office, and men peculiarly adapted to the times in which they lived. In subsequent times, to be a Christian was to be a martyr ; to be a minister of religion was to be in the front ranks of those who constituted the great procession that was led to the rack or the stake ; and the times demanded men of steady firmness of purpose and of unwavering confidence in God ; men who could cheer their fellow-sufferers, and teach them how to die, as well as how to live ; and such men in early times were found in Ignatius and Polycarp ; in later times in Ridley and Latimer.

Again, subtle and profound systems of philosophy came into the church, and the simplicity of the faith began to be corrupted ; and then was demanded the aid of men who could follow out the mazes of sophistry, and expose skilful error ; and such men were found as Athanasius and Augustine ; in later times such men as Horsly and Edwards. Times like the Reformation, also, demanded a peculiar order of ministers. All the other qualifications of almost every other age seemed to be required in combination. A spirit bold and firm to meet power and rebuke sin in the high places of ecclesiastical office, as well as on thrones ; a readiness to meet martyrdom, and a patience in suf-

fering such as was demanded in the days of Polycarp and Ignatius; the power of detecting and exposing subtle error in the most skillfully constructed system of error that has ever obtained an ascendancy over the human mind; requiring far more ability than was requisite to meet the subtilty of the ancient philosophy; and God raised up such men. The ministry furnished such men as Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, and Cranmer; and never were the demands of an interesting age of the world better met than by the labors of those men. They were made what they were in part by the times in which they lived; but they would have been adapted to any age, and would have left the impress of their great minds upon it. The idea which I have endeavored thus far to illustrate is, that the qualifications for the ministry, at all times, and in all lands, are essentially the same: a pious heart, a prudent mind, a sober judgment, well-directed and glowing zeal, self-denial, simplicity of aim, and deadness to the world; but that these qualifications are to be somewhat modified by the peculiarities of each age; and that the age in which men live must be studied in order that they may make "full proof of their ministry."

I proceed now to what I intend as the main design of this part of this essay, to inquire what are the qualifications for the ministry which are peculiarly demanded by our times and country. What should be the grand aim of the ministry? For what should the ministers of the gospel be peculiarly distinguished? It may be impossible to consider these questions without trenching somewhat on what I have mentioned as the essential qualifications of the ministry at all times, but my main object will not be interfered with.

1. The times in which we live demand of the ministry a close, and patient, and honest investigation of the Bible. The *general* reasons for this are too obvious to detain us. The truths which the ministry is to present are to be derived from the word of God. They are not the truths of mental philosophy; they are not the theories formed by a fertile imagination; they are not the opinions held by men; they are not systems embodied merely in creeds and symbols, they are the ever-fresh and ever-living truths of the Bible. It is almost too obvious to need remark, that the

man who goes forth to proclaim the gospel, should be able, at least, to read it in the language in which it was originally penned. Why should a man attempt to expound a message which he can neither read nor understand as it came from the hand of him who commissioned him? Can there be a more evident unfitness for his work than to be ignorant of the very document which it is the main business of his life to explain to others? It is almost too absurd for grave remark, to speak of an ambassador who cannot, except by an interpreter, read his own credentials; of a lawyer who cannot read the laws which he expounds; of a teacher who cannot read even the books which he professes to teach.

And yet it is as true as it is melancholy, that the business of *studying* the Bible, in any proper sense of the word *study*, is a business to which even in the ministry there is often a sad reluctance. I speak now of the fair and honest study of the Scriptures in the language in which they were originally written, and in the use of all the helps which the God of Providence and grace has now given to illustrate this most wonderful ancient book which the ministry is called to explain and defend. Who knows not how reluctantly this is approached even in the seminaries of Christian theology? Who knows not how it is often laid aside as soon as the departing evangelist has bid adieu to the place of his theological training? And who knows not that the whole arrangement of the "study" afterwards contemplates the removal of all books written in the Greek and Hebrew tongue to the most remote and unfrequented department of the Library? And who is ignorant of the fact, that to multitudes of ministers in this land, with all the advantages which they have had, the original languages of the Scriptures are unapproached and inapproachable treasures—gold and diamonds hidden from their view, or rich ore which they are incapable of turning up to find the truth. The study of the original languages of the Scriptures in our seminaries is often like the study of music in the schools of female education. Many a weary hour is spent upon it; many a difficulty met and surmounted; and when the sober business of life is entered on, music is laid aside as useless, or its memory is revived only to amuse an idle hour, or to please the transient guest. Happy would it be if the ministers of religion would, even for

amusement, recall the study of the languages in which holy men spoke and wrote. But a higher motive assuredly should lead them to it—the high motive of being able to understand the book to an explanation of which they have devoted their lives.

The age in which we live is not, as it seems to me, distinguished for simple and direct appeals to the Bible, in defence of the doctrines of religion. Extensively it is an age in which the appeal is made to the opinions of the fathers; to the authority of creeds and symbols of faith; to the opinions of other times; an age in which to depart from those symbols and opinions, or to doubt their infallibility, is regarded with suspicion, and when such a departure in the slightest degree turns many an eye with deep vigilance on the first steps of the wanderer. By many it is held, or rather *felt*, that the system of religious doctrine has been settled by the investigations of the past; that there is no hope of discovering any new truth; that theology, as now held, is not susceptible of improvement; that the whole field has been dug over again and again with instruments as finished as our own, and by as keen-sighted laborers as any of the present age can be; and that it is presumption for a man to hope to find in those mines a new gem that would sparkle in the crown of truth.

No good or grateful man will undervalue the wisdom of the past. He will be thankful for all the toil of the hands, the head and the heart, by which we are placed in our present advanced position over other times. In religion, as well as in everything else, we are acting on the results, and deriving the full benefit of the experience of the past. We reap the fruits of all the self-denials and sacrifices; the profound studies, the travels, the skilful inventions, and the sufferings of past times. Every happy discovery, every ingenious invention, every hour of patient study, every improvement in past times, has gone into the amelioration of the human condition, and has contributed its part to the civilization and refinement of the age in which we live. There has not been a philosopher who has not thought for us; not a traveller who has not travelled for us; not a defender of liberty who has not fought for us; not an advocate of violated rights who has not pleaded for us; not a skilful student in medicine who has not contributed something to make our condition more happy; not a martyr who has not suffered to establish the religion whose smiles

and sunshine we now enjoy, and not a profound thinker in theology who has not done something to chase away error, and to disclose the truth, that we may see it and be made better for it. "Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors. We begin where they left off; we start on life under all the advantages of the wisdom and knowledge and piety of past times; and we should not undervalue or despise it.

But is the field fully explored? Is there nothing yet to be learned from the bible? Is there no encouragement for us to study the word of God? Are we to receive the systems made ready to our hands, and to suppose that there may be no rich vein in this bed, that has not yet been fully explored? Even were it so, it would be better for the minister of religion to go to the Bible and get his views of truth there, than from any mortal lips, or from any human system of theology. There all is still fresh, and vigorous, and instinct with life. The word of God is a fountain ever fresh and health-giving; and the streams that issue thence create a rich verdure where they flow. They are like the rivers that flow along in the deserts in the East. There the course of a stream can be traced afar by the trees, and shrubs, and flowers, and grass that spring up on its bank, and that are sustained by it in its course—a long waving line of green in the waste of sands. Where it winds along, that line of verdure winds along; where it expands into a lake that expands; where it dies away or is lost in the sand, that disappears. So it is with views of truth that are derived from the word of God. Their course can be traced along in a world not unlike pathless sands, as the course of the river can be traced in the desert. The Bible is the true fountain of waters in this world; and as we wander away from that, in our investigations and our preaching, we wander amid pathless sands.

But can there be any improvement in theology? Can there be any advance made on the discoveries of other times? Is it not presumptuous for us to hope to see what the keen-sighted vision of other times has not seen? Is not the system of theology perfect as it came from God? I answer, yes. And so was astronomy a perfect system when the "morning stars sang together;" but it is one thing for the system to be perfect as it came from God, and another for it to be perfect as it appears in the form in



which we hold it. So were the sciences of botany, and chemistry, and anatomy perfect as they came from God; but ages have been required to understand them as they existed in His mind; and other ages may yet furnish the means of improvement on those systems as held by man. So God has placed the gold under ground, and the pearls at the bottom of the sea for man—perfect in their nature as they came from his hand. Has all the gold been dug from the mines? Have all the pearls been fished from the bottom of the ocean? The whole system of sciences was as perfect in the mind of God as the system of revealed truth; yet all are given to man to be sought out; to be elaborated by the process of ages; to reward human diligence, and to make man a “co-worker with God.” “Truth is the daughter of time;” and is it to be assumed that all the truth is not known? That there is no error in the views with which we now hold it? That all is known of the power of truth yet on the human soul?

I am now speaking of the ministry, and not of theology in general; and I am urging to the study of the Bible with a view to a more successful preaching of the gospel. It seems to me that as yet we know comparatively little of the power of preaching the truths of the Bible. That man has gained much as a preacher who is willing to investigate, by honest rules, the meaning of the Bible, and then to suffer the truth of God to speak out—no matter where it leans, and no matter on what man, or customs, or systems it inpinges. Let it take its course like an unobstructed stream, or like a beam of light direct from the sun to the eyes of men. But when we seek to make embankments for the stream, to confine it within channels, such as we choose, how much of its beauty is lost, and how often do we obstruct it! When we interpose *media* between us and the pure light of the sun that we deem ever so clear, how often do we turn aside the rays or divide the beam into scattered rays that may make a pretty picture, but which prevent the full glory of the unobstructed sun! There is a power yet to be seen in preaching the Bible which the world has not fully understood; and he does an incalculable service to his own times and to the world, who derives the truths which he inculcates directly from the Book of life. Besides, the Bible is receiving constant illustrations and confirmations from every science, and from every traveler into the oriental world. Not a

man comes back to us from the east who does not give us some new illustration of the truth or the beauty of the Bible. He who wanders among the ruins of Babylon; he who visits the mount of Olives or Lebanon; he who gazes upon the remains of temples, and palaces, and upon the dwelling-places of the dead; he who tells us of desolate Petra or the barren rock of Tyre; he who describes to us the Bedouin, or tells us how they build a house or pitch a tent in the east, is doing something to make us better acquainted with the Bible. A few years past have opened here a vast field of interesting research, and that research has turned the attention of the world to the full confirmation of the Scripture prophecies; and for a theologian there is now no field of investigation more rich and promising than this; and how can a man, whose business it is to explain the oracles of God, be ignorant of it? But where should I stop in the illustration of this point? The minister should be familiar with that wonderful book which he professes to explain and to defend. His life is none too long to make it the object of his study; nor will the field be all explored when *we* die. It will be as fresh, and beautiful, and *new*, too, to the next generation as it is to us; and when *we* die, so far from having reached the *ultima Thule* of discovery in the word of God, we shall feel that we have but just entered on the boundless ocean. I confess that long since *I* have abandoned all idea of fully understanding the Bible in all its parts in this world; and I am amazed when men gravely suppose there cannot be truths there, like diamonds in the earth, on which the eye has never yet gazed.—The amount of what I have said on this point is this, that the preacher who would make full proof of the ministry, should derive all his doctrines from the word of God; he should be familiar with all that can illustrate the Bible;—with its language, its scope, its design; with all in criticism, archæology, history, travels, manners, customs, laws, that shall go to vindicate its divine origin, and explain its meaning. From this pure fountain of life he should constantly drink. Let him climb the hill of Calvary rather than the heights of Parnassus, and love less to linger at the Castalian Fount than at

“Siloah’s brook that flowed

Fast by the oracle of God.

II. The times in which we live demand a ministry that shall be distinguished for sound and solid learning. Never, indeed, can this qualification be safely dispensed with; but there is not a little in our age and country that peculiarly demands it. In no nation on the face of the earth has there been a more prevailing and permanent conviction that this was an important, if not an essential qualification for the ministry, than in our own; and to this conviction, and the natural result of that conviction in preparing the ministry for its work, is to be traced no small measure of the respect shown to the sacred office in our land. Our countrymen in general are qualified to appreciate good sense, solid learning, and high attainments, and they are prepared to do honor to such attainments wherever they may be found. It is a bright fact in our history that the first college in our land was founded for the purpose of training up men for the Christian ministry; and it is a fact, that is at the same time honorable to the solid learning of the ministry, and that bespeaks the confidence which the community reposes in the ministry, that nearly all the Presidents, and a very large portion of the professors in our colleges, are, to this day, ministers of the gospel. The people of this nation are willing that this state of things should continue. They evince no impotence under the working of the system. They desire no change. The experience of two hundred years has satisfied them that the system works well; and the men of the world, and even the majority of infidels in the land, who have sons to educate, are so satisfied with the propriety of the arrangement, that all they demand is the evidence of solid learning united with piety, to place all these institutions in the hands of the ministers of the gospel.

But it is not with this reference now that I advocate the necessity of solid learning. It is with reference to the immediate duties of the pastoral office. I do not believe that a minister of the gospel should enter on his work *with a view* to become ultimately a President of a literary institution. If he becomes such, it should be because there are intimations of divine will that do not leave the question of duty in doubt. It is with reference to the office of Pastor; to the work of the ministry; to the business of saving souls, that I now urge the argument that the times demand a ministry that shall be distinguished for solid learning.

It should be for the following among many other reasons: (1.) There is great danger of neglecting and undervaluing such attainments. There is great danger that, with whatever views the ministry may be entered, the attention may be soon turned from the pursuit of whatever can be appropriately classed under the head of classical attainments, or whatever bears on the sciences, or whatever marks progress in the severe discipline of the mind. This is an age of action—in the ministry and in the world. It is a time when ministers are called to a great amount of labor; when they are expected to perform a much larger amount of pastoral duties than was required in the days of our fathers; when the numerous benevolent institutions of the age make a constant draft on the time, and strength, and toil of pastors; when the cause of temperance, of morals, and of missions—with numerous kindred causes depend on the ministers of the gospel; and when, therefore, they are in great danger of satisfying their consciences for a neglect of classic learning, by the fact that they are called to a great amount of collateral duties. It is not to be wondered at that in these circumstances a warm-hearted pastor in the midst of the thrilling scenes of a work of grace, or in the pleasantness of the pastoral intercourse, or in the wearisomeness caused by the demands on his time, should excuse himself from the diligent pursuit of the somewhat foreign or collateral subjects that do not bear directly on his work. (2.) Again. This is an age when the mass of men are driven forward by headlong propensities, and when there is danger of trampling down, in the pursuit of honor and of gold, all that has been hitherto regarded as valuable and settled in solid learning, as well as in staid and virtuous habits. To careful observers of the propensities of this age it has not been regarded as a matter of wonder that the attempt should have been made to displace classic learning from the schools, and to introduce men into the ministry by a shorter course than our fathers thought necessary, and in such a way as to unfit them, when *in* the ministry, for any eminent attainments in solid learning. It is one of the regular results of the course of events in this age. It is an age, say those who plead for this, of enterprise and action. A large part of life, they go on to remark, is wasted before men begin to act. Months and years are consumed in the attainment of profitless learning; in the mere drilling of the

Christian soldier, while he ought to be in the field. On the basis of such reasoning as this, the plan is formed for preparing men for action, and for action only. The classics are laid aside. The time of preparation is shortened. The field is to be entered at an earlier age, and the 'study' is to be a place quite secondary and unimportant in the arrangements of the ministerial life. Have such men forgotten that a long and tedious training, involving, apparently, a great waste of time, is the allotment of man? What would seem to be a greater waste of time than that one-third of the ordinary life of man in the period of infancy, childhood, and youth, is passed in the slow and cumbersome process of learning to talk, to move, to read, to think, and to become acquainted with the elements of the mechanic arts? Is it then a departure from the established laws of the world, when men are called by long and weary toils, to prepare for the momentous work of leading sinners to the altar and the cross? Who knows not how much more was gained on the field of Waterloo, or in the strife at Trafalgar, by regular and disciplined troops, than could have been done by raw and undisciplined men? And who, when the banners of victory float over the fields of the slain, or the acclamations of emancipated freemen greet the returning conqueror, regret the days of discipline, or the time spent in preparing for conflict? And who is to stand up against the headlong propensities of this age, if it be not the minister of the gospel? And who are to teach our deluded countrymen that there is something better than gold; that the landmarks of opinion and learning, of morals and sound sense, are not to be trodden down, if it be not the ministers of religion? And where shall we look for that which will command the respect of thinking men, if it be not to those who have been trained with care in our schools, and who are, by their office, to be the guides and instructors of mankind? Again; (3.) The age in which we live, is, perhaps, more than most former ages, a period when the attacks on Christianity have been drawn from learning and science. Each of the sciences as it has developed itself, has been arrayed in some form against the authority of the Bible, and often by the skill of the adversaries of the Christian religion in such a form as to alarm its friends. At one time the argument was derived from the disclosures of modern astronomy; at another from the ancient records of Hin-



dostan and China, and the dynasties of kings who are recorded to have reigned cycles of ages before the account, in Moses, of the creation; at another time the infidel has gone and interrogated the crater of the volcano and searched its hardened scoræ, and made it tell of ages long before the Scripture account of the creation of man; and at another the argument has been drawn from the researches of the geologist. All sciences have been taxed to find objections to the Bible; and there are few infidels who have not derived their objections from some form of pretended learning. In such an age, what shall the ministers of religion do who are unable to defend the book, to vindicate and explain which is the business of their lives? In this, strife and declamation will not do for argument; nor will assertion, however confident or fierce, satisfy thinking men. The minister of the gospel should, as he easily may, command the respect of his fellow-men, and should show them—as he easily may, without ostentation—that he is not unworthy the confidence due to one in the office which he sustains.

I am not ignorant of the objections which may be felt and urged to these remarks. I know it may be asked how is time to be found for these attainments? How shall health be secured for these objects? And another question, not less important, how shall the *heart* be kept, and the fire of devotion be maintained, brightly burning on the altar of the heart, while making these preparations? I should transcend all reasonable bounds in my remarks, if I were to attempt to go fully into an answer to these inquiries. I would only observe that it may be at least questionable whether all the ministers of the gospel have just that sense of the value of time which they ought to have, and whether all make full proof of their ministry in the utmost cultivation of their powers. The question whether the diligence of the student and the faithfulness of the pastor can be united: whether the intellect may be intensely cultivated so as not to interfere with the growth of grace in the heart; and whether time can be secured for the pursuit of these objects, and yet not interfere with the public duties of the ministry; whether a man may so study as to contribute something to carry forward the intellect of his age, and yet not interfere with his duties in the pulpit, in the prayer-meeting, in the Bible-class, and in family visitation, and so as to secure

permanent health also is a question which it would be of immense importance to settle. "What shall we say to the nine ponderous folios of Augustine, and nearly the same number of Chrysostom, volumes not written like Jerome's in monastic retirement, but in the midst of almost daily preaching engagements, and conflicting, anxious, and responsible duties?" What shall we say of the nine folios of Calvin—the most diligent preacher of his age—the man who read every week in the year, three lectures in divinity; and who preached two hundred and eighty-six times in the year? What shall we say to the folios of Baxter, the most laborious pastor and the most successful minister of his day? What shall we say of the volumes of Edwards, perhaps the most laborious student, as he was the profoundest man and the best preacher of his time? In that great man, assuredly, profound study never interfered with humble-hearted piety; and in him the contemplation of the most abstruse subjects of metaphysical inquiry did not interfere with the most simple style of preaching, or with that solemn and effective eloquence of the heart which bathes a congregation in tears. But I cannot enlarge on this point. The sum of my remarks is, that we may not in this age have learned the art of making full proof of our ministry, and that there may be a blending of study, and piety, and pastoral fidelity such as shall greatly augment the usefulness of those who minister at the altar.

III. The times demand a ministry of sober views; of settled habits of industry; of plain practical good sense; of sound and judicious modes of thinking; a ministry that shall be patient, equable, persevering, and that shall look for success rather in the proper results of patient toil, than in new experiments, and new modes of doing things. Against real improvements, and plans that shall really save labor, or that shall be a wise adaptation of skill to *save* labor, no good man can utter a word. Such plans are not to be rejected merely because they appear to be innovations, nor is anything to be set down as certainly wrong because it is new. If a doctrine or measure be true and wise, no minister of the gospel should be found in opposition to it. But the idea which I wish to convey, is, that the ministers of the gospel should not expect to accomplish their objects by anything which contemplates success as the *mere* result of new and untried experi-

ments, or anything which shall be originated to avoid severe, and patient, and protracted toil. Success should not be expected from that which is adapted merely to startle, shock, surprise, confound, or perplex. Success should not be looked for as the result of scheming, of dark plans, of unusual modes of thought, of paradoxes in theology, or in an affected originality. The men who enter the ministry should be men who will be willing to labor patiently as long as may be necessary to accomplish an object; to tread on if necessary, in a path which has been trodden by thousands before; and at the close of life to look back upon results gained by patient toil rather than on the results of fitful efforts, however brilliant, or which have only served to startle and amaze mankind. Need I state *reasons* why the age demands such a ministry? Not so much for the purpose of stating reasons as for illustrating what I mean, I would refer to the following *summary* of points which I have not room to illustrate at length. (1.) The people of our nation, and our ancestors in our father-land, have hitherto been distinguished among other nations for this: for what is sensible and solid rather than for what is brilliant; for the useful rather than the visionary; for patient toil rather than for mere experiment; for what Mr. Locke calls "large, sound, round-about sense;" a trait of character which has given us *some* advantages, at least, over the volatile Frenchman, the dull and dark Spaniard, the effeminate Italian, and the visionary and contemplative German: and it is desirable that the ministry should do *something*, at least, to maintain this trait in the national character. (2.) The age in which we live is *becoming* visionary, and wild, and headlong in its propensities. Bubbles swell and burst on every side; fancied cities of extreme beauty and eminent commercial advantages, *on paper*, rise on every hill, and in every vale, and beside every water-fall and stream, and fall, and are succeeded by others as rapidly as if they were some splendid moving pageant; fortunes are made and lost as if men were playing marbles, or as if the business of life had become the sports of children. (3.) There is a tendency to crowd these things into religion, and to pursue the work of religion, and the business of saving souls, by plans as wild as those by which men seek gain. Novel theories are broached; novel plans formed; associations are entered into for

unpracticable purposes ; and opinions are started anew and advocated, which experience has shown to have been wild, and false, and dangerous centuries ago. Soon many of those plans are abandoned—as the paper cities disappear from the map of the nation ; or the vain speculator in theology gains as much wisdom and knowledge as the speculator in lands and town lots does gold ; and time is wasted for “ that which is not bread, and labor for that which satisfieth not.”

(4.) From such bubbles, and from mere experiments, the ministry should stand aloof. These games, if they must be played, should be played by the world. By example, and by precept, by a patient, sober, practical life, as well as by preaching, the ministers of the gospel are to recall men to the soberness of truth. A preacher has no time to lose in mere experiments ; none to squander in idle speculations. The average length of time in the ministry in this country is probably not twenty years ; and ALL that time *may* be filled up in a course of undoubted wisdom, and a warfare with evil, where not one blow shall be struck on the empty air.

(5.) Again. The age in which we live is becoming distinguished not merely for pursuits of things of little or no promise or utility, but for putting things of real value out of their places ; or for the disproportionate location of things of real worth. There are multitudes of men who become eminent, not for pursuing an object of no importance, but for pursuing it in a manner which requires everything else to give place to it. Some one favorite project is held so near to the eye, that nothing else is seen ; and they are distinguished for what is known in a homely, but expressive phrase, for *riding hobbies*. With one, temperance is everything ; with another, the tract cause ; with another, the Bible cause ; with another, the cause of moral reform ; with another, the rights of the slave ; and so on through all the catalogue of the plans of benevolence, wise and unwise. With one, the age goes too fast ; and the great design of the ministry is to “ stand still and hold back ;” and with another, the age goes to slow ; and the object of the ministry is, Jehu-like, to spur on its sluggish movements. Many or most of these things are seen and admitted to be important ; and they who do not see them as their advocates do, are denounced as accessories to the evils to be remedied, or as time-servers. All the interests of the church and the state ; of Chris-



tian and heathen lands, are made to turn on the success of the one project; and he who does not see it as the zealous advocate does, is held up as recreant to his master. Now, however natural this amiable propensity may be to men who have but one cause to advocate, yet it is not the feeling which is to be cultivated by the ministry of the gospel. The pastor, the great guardian, under God, of the dearest interests of benevolence, of social order, and of the rights of man, is to look out with a well-balanced mind, and a clear and calm eye, upon *all* the interests of benevolence. He is to endeavor to look upon things in their just proportions. He is to look abroad upon the world. Temperance is not everything; nor is the cause of foreign missions, or domestic missions, or tracts, or human liberty everything. They are parts of one great whole; the plans for these and kindred objects are bright and beautiful portions in the great picture of benevolence. To the pastoral office we look that these objects should be held up in their proper proportions; and the moment when the pastor loses the proper balance of his mind, and begins to ride "a hobby," that moment his usefulness begins to wane.

(6.) One other thought under this head. The age demands a ministry distinguished for sober industry. There is enough to accomplish to demand all the time, and it cannot be accomplished by mere genius, or by fitful efforts. It must be by patient toil. An industrious man, no matter what his talents, will always make himself respectable; an indolent man, no matter what his genius, never can be. In the ministry, pre-eminently, no man should presume on his genius, or talents, or superiority to the mass of minds around him. A man owes his best efforts to his people, and to his master; to the one by a solemn compact when he becomes their pastor, to the other by sacred covenant when deeply feeling the guilt of sin and the grateful sense of pardon, he gave himself to the great Redeemer in the ministry of reconciliation. An idle man in the ministry is a violator of at least two sacred compacts; and upon such a man God will not, does not smile.

IV. The times demand men in the ministry who shall be the warm and unflinching advocates of every good cause.



(1.) Men are required who shall have so well-settled and intelligent views of truth as not to be afraid of the examination of any opinion, or afraid to defend any sentiment which is in accordance with the word of God. They should be men of such independence of mind, that they will examine every subject, and every opinion that may be submitted to them, or on which they may be called to act. The times are not theoretically against free discussion and the independent maintenance of one's own opinions. The character of the age will not tolerate that. But the secret aim is, to screen a *few* points from examination. It is so to present the authority of past times and of great names, as to secure certain points from examination. Now the pulpit is to be one place—if the last in the world—of free and independent examination of all the opinions which can affect the destiny or the duty of man. Should the right of free examination and of free discussion be driven from the capitol; should the conductors of the press cower before the outbreakings of popular violence; should men in all other places succeed in isolating certain subjects as points which are never to be examined; yet the pulpit is to remain as the last place to which liberty is to take its flight, and in the sanctuary men are to breathe freely, and to be allowed to speak their emotions with no one to make them afraid. Our fathers, in this commonwealth, worshipped God with arms in their hands, to guard themselves from the attacks of savage barbarians. Not with such arms, we trust, are we to defend the right of free discussion; but such a wilderness is again to be sought—if there remains such an one on the earth—and such perils again encountered, before the sons of the pilgrims shall yield the right of the free expression of their sentiments in the pulpit, on all the great questions that affect the welfare of man. The man of God is to enter that sacred place with his Bible as his guide, and is to be unawed in its exposition by any great names; by any fear of personal violence; by any decrees of councils; or by any laws which this world can ever promulgate to fetter the freedom of thought. There, at least, is to be one place where truth may be examined, and where the voice of God may be heard in our world; and there, as long as he who holds the stars in his right hand shall continue life, is the truth to shine forth on a dark world.

2. Men are required in the ministry who shall be the warm and decided friends of the temperance reformation ; and whose opinions and practice on this subject shall be shaped by the strictest laws of morals. For this opinion, the reasons are plain. The temperance reform is one of the features of the age. Revolutions do not go backward ; and this cause is destined, it is believed, to triumph, and ultimately to settle down on the principles of the most strict morals. It was a sage remark of Jefferson, that no good cause is undertaken and persevered in, which does not ultimately overcome every obstacle and secure a final triumph ; and if anything certain respecting the future can be argued from the past, it is that this cause will secure an ultimate victory. The *people* will carry it forward, whatever may be the feelings of the ministers of the gospel. Now, it is not only the duty of the ministers of religion to be foremost in "every good word and work," but it is a fact that they may soon be left far in the rear in this cause, and a fact that such a position will materially impede their own work. A people zealous in the cause of temperance will not long sit under the ministrations of a man who indulges in intoxicating drinks ; nor can he, by any eloquence in preaching, counteract the effect which this single fact will have on their minds. Besides, the ministry has already suffered enough from intemperance. Not a few men in this land, of the brightest talent that was ever adapted to adorn the pulpit, have fallen a sacrifice to this destroyer ; and they have left their names to be mentioned hereafter with pity and dishonor.

(3.) In like manner, the times demand a ministry that shall be the unflinching advocates of revivals of religion. Such men lived in other times ; and such scenes blessed the land where Davis, and Edwards, and Whitfield, and the Tennents lived. What is needed now is the ministry of men who have an intelligent faith in revivals ; who have no fear of the effects which truth, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, shall have on the mind ; who shall so far understand the philosophy of revivals as to be able to vindicate them when assailed, and to show to men of intelligence that they are in accordance with the laws of our nature ; and whose preaching shall be such as shall be fitted, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to secure such results on the minds of men. To revivals of religion our country owes

more than all other moral causes put together ; and if our institutions are preserved in safety, it must be by such extraordinary manifestations of the presence and the power of God. Our sons forsake the homes of their fathers ; they wander away from the place of schools and churches to the wilderness of the west ; they go from the sound of the Sabbath-bell, and they forget the Sabbath and the Bible, and the place of prayer ; they leave the places where thh<sup>r</sup> fathers sleep in their graves, and they forget the religion which sustained and comforted them. They go for gold, and they wander over the prairie, they fell the forest, they ascend the stream in pursuit of it, and they trample down the law of the Sabbath ; and soon, too, forget the laws of honesty and fair-dealing, in the insatiable love of gain. Meantime, every man, such is our freedom, may advance any sentiments he pleases. He may defend them by all the power of argument, and enforce them by all the eloquence of persuasion. He may clothe his corrupt sentiments in the charms of verse, and he may make a thousand cottages beyond the mountains re-echo with the corrupt and the corrupting strain. He may call to his aid the power of the press, and may secure a lodgment for his infidel sentiments in the most distant habitation in the republic. What can meet this state of things, and arrest the evils that spread with the fleetness of the courser or the wind ? What can pursue and overtake these wanderers but revivals of religion—but that Spirit which, like the wind, acts where it pleases ? Yet they must be pursued. If our sons go thus, they are to be followed and reminded of the commands of God. None of them are to be suffered to go to any fertile vale or prairie in the west without the institutions of the gospel ; nor are they to be suffered to construct a hamlet, or to establish a village, or to build a city that shall be devoted to any other God than the God of their fathers. By all the self-denials of benevolence ; by all the power of argument ; by all the implored influences of the Holy Ghost, they are to be persuaded to plant there the rose of Sharon, and to make the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to bud and blossom as the rose. In such circumstances God HAS interposed ; and he has thus blessed our own land and times with signal revivals of religion.

Our whole country thus far has been guarded and protected

by the presence of the Spirit of God; and "*American revivals*" have been the objects of the most intense interest among those in other lands who have sought to understand the secret of our prosperity. That man who enters the pulpit with a cold heart and a doubtful mind, in regard to such works of grace; who looks with suspicion on the means which the Spirit of God has appointed and blessed for this object in past times; and who coincides with the enemies of revivals in denouncing them as fanaticism, understands as little the history of his own country as he does the laws of the human mind and the Bible, and lacks the spirit which a man should have who stands in an American pulpit.

(4.) Men are required who shall stand up as the firm advocates of missions, and of every proper project for the world's conversion. That great design of bringing this whole world, by the divine blessing, under the influence of Christian truth, is one of the strong features of the age; and the hope and expectation of it has seized upon the churches with a tenacity which will not be relaxed. The plan is not the work of a moment, and has none of the marks of enthusiasm. There never was a plan of conquest that was so deliberately formed, or that enlisted so many hearts before. Schemes of victory to be gained by blood have usually been formed by some one master mind—some ambitious monarch or warrior, while the nation over which he ruled had no sympathy with the plan, and no agency in its formation; or where the army was led on by the strength of military discipline alone. But this is not the origin of the plan for securing the conquest of this world for God. It is no plan of a leader simply; it has been formed by the church at large—the mass of Christians who are prepared to go on with it whether the ministers of religion will or will not guide them. The church at large will bear with no patience opposition in the ministry to this great undertaking; nor can a minister long hold his place in the confidence and affections of the church, whose heart is not in this work. He who does not enter on this work prepared to devote his talents and learning, his heart and bodily powers to the advancement of this cause, has not the spirit of the age, and falls behind the times in which he lives.

(5.) The times demand men in the ministry who shall be men



of peace. The period has arrived in the history of the world when there should be a full and fair illustration of the power of the gospel to produce a spirit of *peace* in the hearts of all the ambassadors of him who was the "Prince of Peace." The fondness for theological combat and ecclesiastical gladiatorship, has been one of the most remarkable characteristics pertaining to the character of the ministers of the gospel in past times, and one which it may be difficult to account for. In a portion of the ministry, to a melancholy extent, this has been a characteristic of the ministry of the present times. Whatever may have been the causes, and whoever may have been to blame, it is certain that this spirit of contention and strife is one of the things which has been most apparent for a few past years; and that the weapons of war are still kept furbished, and that the champions are not disposed to lay them aside. Having tried these weapons long enough, with only the advantage that accrues to an army in a dark night, when one part of the army draws the sword on another, there is now needed a ministry that shall follow after the things that make for peace;" where there shall be mutual confidence and charity; where there shall be candor for one another's imperfections; where there shall be toleration of opinions on points that do not affect the essentials of Christian doctrine; and where there shall be harmony of view and action on the great work of saving the world. For twenty years, it may be remarked, particularly, the din of ecclesiastical strife has been heard again within the bounds of that Christian community of which Davies was a minister and a member; and again, as in his time, that church has been rent in twain, and the noise of the strife has been heard afar. This strife has been long enough. Enough of that glory has been achieved, for one age, which can be achieved by arraying brother against brother, and altar against altar; by skill in noisy polemics and in harsh denunciation; by rending the church asunder, and by triumph where victory is always equal to defeat. We want now men of peace, and charity, and love; men who can bear and forbear, men who will not "make a brother an offender for a word;" men who shall be more anxious to convert a sinner from the errors of his ways than to defend the "shibboleth" of party. Such men, too, the church will soon have. It requires now all the zeal and talent of the leaders in the strife to convince the mass of Christians that the



controversy is of any importance ; and even that slight sense of the importance of the points for which there is such a noise of contention, is fast dying away.

It is an auspicious circumstance in these times, that there is such a demand for such works as those of President Davies, as to warrant their republication. The effect of the study of such models on the ministry and on the churches, cannot but be auspicious to the cause of evangelical religion. It is one of the honors of our country, young though we are, that we do not lack for examples of the highest order of preaching ; and even now, when we look through a great library for the best models, we instinctively fix on some that have been produced on this side the ocean. The purest models of preaching are to be found undoubtedly, in the discourses of the apostles and of the Great Preacher ; but after leaving those times, we shall find no land, probably, where there have been exhibited more correct specimens of pure classic style, of sober thought, of instructive discourses, of appeals adapted to rouse the conscience of a sinner, or to warm the heart of a child of God, than have been furnished in our own land. The American pulpit, imperfect as it is, is more elevated in its influence and power than that of any other nation ; and in no other country is its influence so justly appreciated or so deeply felt on the public mind. Much as we may revere the memory of the past ; much as we may learn from the wisdom of other generations ; and much as we may honor those who have been or are distinguished for eminent usefulness across the waters, yet if we wish to see the power of preaching exemplified in the hearts of men, and to derive instruction from the lives and success of those of other times, we cannot find a more appropriate place than to sit down at the feet of such men as Davies, and Edwards, and the Tennents, and Strong, and Payson, and Dwight, and Griffin, and Bedell. It will be an honor to tread in the footsteps of such men ; it is an indication of a healthful tone in the public sentiment, and of holy aspirations in the candidates for the holy office, when the works of these men shall be demanded from the press ; it is an indication of good when the times require the republication of such discourses as are here given again to the public—the warm, glowing, fervent, eloquent sermons of the much lamented President of Nassau Hall.

